
SUCH FOLLIES ARE.

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SUCH FOLLIES ARE:

A NOVEL.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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SUCH FOLLIES ARE.

LETTER XI.

LEAVING the disappointed lover to make the best of a very unpropitious destiny, it is time we attend Mrs. Seaforth and her party on the Bath excursion. It was the first time she had ever visited that polite city, and having

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for near thirty years nourished her own self-importance in the retirement of a country village, it may be supposed she brought every single particle thereof to the place in which she now appeared. Every thing in her dress, equipage, and carriage, was managed with so ridiculous an attempt to appear more superbly than any body else, that an ample fund for laughter was soon exhibited to the company assembled in the place, and the characteristic traits of this most noble family, afforded a general theme for ridicule: Julia indeed must be excepted, who alone attracted a notice blended with respect

pect—but this expression is much too flat—that lovely girl, whose form was gracefulness, and features symmetry itself, inspired universal admiration: She united in her person the bloom of beauty, elegance of manners, and every expression of female dignity; not that her air had any thing of what is called the ton, but it had a charming naïvete, which, in the estimation of many, is infinitely more interesting. Julia was indeed a stranger to the gay world, and this was the first time she had ever been ten miles from her natal home, but there was nothing about her of that awkward bash-

fulness, which frequently characterizes a country education: Her air was naturally graceful, and probably her acquaintance with Mrs. Hanbury had contributed to give an elegance to her manners, not often surpassed by people of the highest fashion. Mrs. Seaforth was gratified by the attention paid her lovely daughter, tho' it fell short of the end she had proposed in this excursion, namely, the matching her with some gentleman of distinction; for though many beheld the young lady with admiration, yet the indigence of the Seaforth family being by this time pretty well known, no serious

rious proposals of that nature had been made—the reason no doubt was, that the taste for expence, so prevalent with all ranks of society, seldom renders it expedient to obey the dictates of love alone in a matrimonial negotiation: On this account, and one more immediately concerning herself, Mrs. Seaforth soon became tired of Bath. In this brilliant assemblage of the fashionable world, the poor woman felt her own importance dwindled to nothing; notwithstanding the pride of descent, which she had always nourished to a preposterous degree, she was here obliged to resign the claim of

precedence to several, whose pedigrees fell short of that which she herself could boast, by the distance of three or four centuries—this was a mortifying reflection, and no wonder she became desirous of quitting a place, where she almost had shrunk to a very non-entity, to enjoy again the delightful consequence of a 'Squire's lady, in a country village: Nor was Mr. Edric much better satisfied with his present situation---the manners and conversation of his own sex appeared of a very different kind to what he had all his life been accustomed to; and the very little notice, not to say absolute contempt, which

which he experienced from the ladies, gave him a complete disgust to every thing about him.

At length, however, fortune seemed to compassionate the situation of this singular family, by procuring the arrival of two personages, most admirably adapted to sooth the chagrin which they sensibly felt. Baron Wesmar, and his sister, the Lady Teresa, had for some time been known in the polite world as the flower of the polish noblese, and, luckily for the Seaforth's, arrived at Bath a very few days before that on which they had determined to

quit it. The first meeting of the two families was at the rooms, where his Lordship's eyes were forcibly attracted by the figure of Miss Julia. He did not, however, address her with the pert forwardness of a *petit maitre*, nor did he so far degrade his dignity, as to form an acquaintance with persons of whose situations in life he was not previously satisfied; however, after due inquiry, he thought proper to honour Mrs. Seaforth with very particular notice, and that lady, having heard much of the effects of sympathy, was fully persuaded that the noble Pole had recognized in her face the high blood

blood which ran in her veins, he being also of a very ancient house, and as he himself assured her, lineally descended from John Sobieski. After an incident so fortunate, as this meeting appeared to both parties, the two families became inseparable, and Mrs. Seaforth put off her return to the Hall to a more distant period.

This illustrious nobleman was apparently between thirty and forty years of age, not indeed of the most beautiful person, for his stature was remarkably short, and his face broad, red, and plentifully adorned with carbuncles---but
what

what is the person thought of when intrinsic merit absorbs every inferior consideration? Most certainly Baron Wefmar was a man of parts; of free and polite address; and though his demeanour had the true dignity of quality, he was vastly affable, and so extremely lively in conversation, that he might almost be said to engross it entirely to himself; though to an English circle he appeared rather to disadvantage, from his speaking the language in a very broken and inaccurate manner. Mrs. Seaforth, however, discovered a thousand elegancies in his Lordship's discourse, and often declared, that
had

had she been confined merely to conjecture, respecting his condition, she should have known him for a person of the highest quality.

Lady Teresa was some years younger—her stature was tall and commanding, and her large black eyes unquestionably received additional lustre from the rouge, which, agreeably to the French mode, was profusely laid on her cheeks. It certainly could not be denied that her Ladyship was a fine woman, whose education, it was easy to see, had been adapted to her illustrious birth. She was
mistress

mistress of most of the Continental languages, understood music, and danced with inimitable grace ; her manners had all that freedom which distinguish people of fashion ; Julia indeed often thought her really impudent, but that opinion was, no doubt, derived from her own ignorance of the world. Nothing could equal the satisfaction which her Ladyship expressed in the acquaintance of Mrs. Seaforth and family, declaring, that since her arrival in England, 'till now, she had never been so fortunate as to meet with a family whom a person, nobly descended, could with propriety converse with.

with. It was not long before she discovered a particular esteem of Mr. Edric Seaforth. Lady Teresa, it must be observed, was a woman of great sensibility, and though nobody could be supposed to doubt of the delicacy of her soul, yet, as education had happily emancipated her from those awkward restraints which many females think themselves compelled to endure, she made no scruple of avowing her passion, which, to say the truth, the young gentleman had all the dispositions in the world to return; but the ardours which he was strongly inclined to indulge, were generally repressed by

by the awful presence of the Baron---true love, it hath been observed by the wife, is of a timid nature. How it would have fared with the tender Edric cannot be said, had not the amiable frankness of the lady herself extricated him from the delicate embarrassment; though, at the same time, she permitted him to hope every thing from the violence of her affection, she again checked his sanguine ideas, by hinting a suspicion that her brother, the Baron, would never consent to her marrying an Englishman. Mrs. Seaforth, who had marked the progress of this amour with a satisfaction not to be

be expressed, now questioned her son as to a certain air of chagrin, which she had observed him to wear for the last two or three days, and, on being informed of the above obstacle, to his hopes undertook to manage matters with the Baron : For this purpose his Lordship was invited to breakfast with her alone, when, after a pause, which expressed a mixture of hope and fear, she thus addressed him :

“ If I did not believe your Lordship to be one of the most condescending of mankind, I must, at this moment, fly your presence,
rather

rather than attempt a task which the softness of my disposition has engaged me to undertake."

"Be not disconcerted, Madame, (replied the Baron, with an air of affability) me beg you vill proceed---me be all attention---vat vas it you say?"

"Oh, my lord, I scarce know how to begin---but I fancy your Lordship is well convinced of the antiquity of our house; that few of our nobility can boast a pedigree like ours, and therefore we have almost despaired of meeting with a proper alliance for Edric,
the

the heir of name and fortune, but now I have conceived some hopes, which if your Lordship deigns to encourage——”

“It be vell known, Madame, that your family be von of the oldest in the nation, dat be de very reason of my seeing you with de great respect; but vat you going to say?”

“I am a little reassured by this testimony of your Lordship’s esteem—in a word, I have a son, you, my Lord, have a sister.”

“ Vell, vat of dat ?”

“ Nay, my Lord, you positively must surmise the rest—Lady Terefa has charms—my son has sensibility.”

“ O, ho, it be dat I see ; it be von love matter.”

Here Mrs. Seaforth blushed, and concealed her confusion as well as she could with her pocket handkerchief—the Baron paused, and looked very serious—after some minutes he thus resumed,

“ Why, Madam, my sister has very large domain in Poland,

it be derefore proper to ask what Mr. Seaforth inherit; for as to family dere can stand no great objection."

"I blush to say, my Lord, (answered Mrs. Seaforth, much encouraged by the latter hint) that, by the folly of his ancestors, Edric will inherit no more than a thousand pounds a year (which by the way was something of an exaggeration); but then it will be subject to no incumbrance, for my daughter is entitled to about fifteen hundred pounds, by the will of an aunt, which we think

quite sufficient for a daughter of our ancient house."

"Dat be too leetle, Madam, for Lady Terefa—dere vas de Duke Alban, de Count Osterman, and many oder, make love to my sifter."

"Alas, then, poor Edric," exclaimed Mrs. Seaforth.

"But, Madam, (resumed he, after a pause) dere be von condition which make me consent to the propofal."

"What

“What is that, my Lord?”

“Madamoifelle be de pretty lady—suppose she marry me?”

“Is it possible your Lordship can be serious?”

“Oui, Madam, pon honour, Oui—me make her de Baronness Wesmar, and give her de riches of de Wesmar domain.”

Here Mrs. Seaforth could scarcely contain her rapture, sufficiently to assure the Baron of her entire consent, and also to answer for that of Julia, whose

c 3 affections,

affections, she declared, were perfectly disengaged. The conference thus ended, to the satisfaction of both parties, and, from that hour, Edric appeared as the avowed lover of Lady Teresa, who expressed many acknowledgements of his Lordship's goodness, in thus consenting to her wishes. With respect to Julia, the business was not to be managed quite so readily. Mrs. Seaforth had secretly her doubts, whether that silly girl might not prove refractory, and by her caprice spoil all; she therefore determined not to say a syllable of the family compact to her daughter at present, but rather leave

leave her to be won by the Baron's attention, resolved, however, that she should marry him at all events. Entirely unsuspecting of the scheme, Julia treated the Baron with all the civility which her mother required of her, till, by dancing with him at every ball, and constantly appearing with him in public, she was universally considered as his wife elect, by every body at Bath.

LETTER XII.

BARON Wefmar, though professedly an enemy to all kinds of gaming, was extremely fond of a social game at back-gammon, with which he and Edric sometimes amused themselves, when not engaged particularly with the ladies. His lordship declared he would never play for more than a mere trifle, but that which he was pleased

pleased to deem a trifle, was a sum of vast consequence to the finances of Edric; hitherto, however, fortune had been on the side of the latter, and he rose from play one evening something more than an hundred guineas in pocket. Mrs. Seaforth, in a whisper, told him it would be proper to return the winnings, but no sooner was the Baron acquainted with that intention, than he discovered great displeasure—could he possibly be thought so meanly of as to take back the smallest part of a trifle lost at play;—No, his Lordship assured them he valued himself on nothing more than punctuality in
paying

paying his debts, particularly those of play, which he considered as debts of honour, and by no means capable of being lightly esteemed. Many apologies were now offered by the Seaforths, as an atonement for the affront, which he readily accepted, and left them more than ever impressed with an high opinion of his generosity, and princely spirit. “ This Bath journey will be the making of our family, (cried Mrs. Seaforth). What will your father say, when he hears the success of my manoeuvres?—Poor man, he will nearly go mad with joy.”

Affairs

Affairs were in this hopeful train, when Mrs. Seaforth was one morning surprised by a visit from Lord Layton—a nobleman with whom she had not the least acquaintance, but whose character was universally respected. He was the son of a certain naval officer, whose eminent services had deserved so well of his country, that the Sovereign thought proper to repay them with a Peerage. The title had at length descended to his son, who, though in a different sphere, was no less an honour to his country, and generally esteemed for the clearness of

of his head, and the benevolence of his heart.

“ I fancy, Madam, (said Lord Layton, as soon as he was seated) you will deem so unceremonious a visit, from one who has not the honour of your particular acquaintance, a little extraordinary; but really my anxiety for a respectable family is the occasion of it.”

Mrs. Seaforth answered only by a bow and a look, which expressed strong curiosity as to the purport of his Lordship's visit; he therefore thus proceeded:

“ The

“ The public conversation, Madam, is at present much engrossed by the connexion supposed to be on the tapis between one of your family, and the Baron Wefmar.”

“ Really, my Lord, (returned Mrs. Seaforth, bursting into a loud laugh) and do you see any thing so very wonderful in the affair? We have no reasons for desiring a concealment of the circumstance you allude to.”

“ Then I am disappointed, for I had really hoped there might be no foundation in the report.”

“ ’Tis

“ 'Tis a little extraordinary that Lord Layton should have felt either hope or fear on the occasion.”

“ Why so it is, Madam—but so it was, and my solicitude could arise from no other source but an unwillingness to see credulity imposed on—and therefore believe no apology necessary when I ask, whether you are duly satisfied as to the Baron’s character?”

“ Baron Wefmar’s character (highly offended) might defy mean suspicion—Whoever dared to call it in question, my Lord?”

“ Many

“ Many, Madam, have dared to do so, and I assure you I have some doubts myself respecting it ; and therefore, for your own sake, would recommend a little circumspection in the matter.”

“ Oh, your Lordship is vastly friendly ; but as the motive is not extremely hard to be guessed at, I must own myself not quite so sensible of the obligation intended.”

“ Very well, Madam, (rising) I have done. Perhaps in some cooler moment you may be inclined to profit by these well meant

meant intimations—I wish it for your own sake—Good morrow.”

His Lordship was scarcely got without the door, when Mrs. Seaforth, with a laugh of derision, reiterated as loud as she could—The Baron’s character, ha, ha—some folks, I believe, would give up their yesterday title, to have so illustrious an ancestry to boast as Baron Wesmar—Oh, envy, envy, laughing still louder. In the midst of her mirth Mr. Edric entered, whom she was just going to divert at Lord Layton’s expence, when observing that he looked very pensive, she eagerly demanded
what

what was amiss. After a pause, he flung himself, with a peevish air, into the next chair, and gave his mother the following relation :

“ I know not what the d—l possessed me to play—however, I have smarted handsomely for my folly. Did you not wonder what had become of me so long ? —why, d—n it, the Baron and I must needs sit down at his lodgings to piquet—I could never play the game, but one could not refuse him you know ; so I am come home six hundred pounds in debt—that’s all.”

“ Six hundred pounds in debt !” repeated Mrs. Seaforth, in an agony.

“ As sure as you are alive, Mother — now I want to ask your opinion what is to be done — the Baron, to be sure, won’t expect me to pay him the money.”

“ You talk like a blockhead, as you always were — Don’t you remember what he said but yesterday, when you offered to return his hundred pounds ? Why such a thing would ruin us for ever — he would despise our meanness, and break off our connexion at once, that’s

that's for certain. Not pay him!
but indeed you must."

"You don't talk very wisely
I think, Mother—how the d—l
am I to pay him? Furnish me
with the means, before you rate
at this fashion."

Here Mrs. Seaforth lost all
patience, and bitterly reviled her
son for being so weak as to engage
the Baron at play; however, after
she had vented her passion, she
still persevered in the opinion that
the money must be paid, or all
their hope would be crushed at
once; the only difficulty was how

to get the requisite sum. A thought luckily struck Edric at this juncture; he had heard the Baron himself accidentally mention a money lender in the city, to whom people of the first fashion often applied; but the address of this useful man he either had not heard, or had forgot. Mrs. Seaforth, somewhat revived, undertook to fathom the secret, in so skilful a manner, as that the Baron should have no room to suspect the real state of their finances.

The Baron and Lady Teresa, all gaiety and good humour, then
appeared,

appeared, and the conversation took a very interesting turn. As Julia happened not to be present, his Lordship complained much of the coldness with which that young lady received his addresses, and hinted a suspicion that he had been deceived as to the state of her affections. Mrs. Seaforth, on this, made a thousand apologies for the incivility of an ignorant girl, and finally pacified the lover, by an assurance that Julia in due time would properly acknowledge the honour intended her. Edric confirmed the same, by an oath, and vowed, if his sister discovered the least reluctance, she should

be banished the family for ever. In fine, the conversation terminated, by fixing the day for the celebration of the two marriages, which the Baron was earnest to have concluded at Bath, but to this Mrs. Seaforth would by no means consent. Seaforth Hall, she declared, was the proper place for the ceremony to be performed at; and, in consideration of the impatience of the respective lovers, agreed to adjourn thither immediately.

Before their departure, however, it was necessary that Edric should take the proper steps for impressing

impressing his noble friend with a due opinion of his honour, as well as pecuniary ability. Having obtained a direction to the money lender, before mentioned, he repaired to him with all diligence, at the hour at which he understood he did business, that is to say, nine in the morning. In a dirty alley, in an obscure part of the city, he was ushered up two pair of stairs, to a small dark apartment, where sat an old man, habited in a morning gown—his beard was in the most venerable style, extending even to his breast; a large beaver shaded his face, and a black patch totally concealed

one eye. This remarkable personage was busily looking over some parchments when Edric entered—the business was soon transacted between them, however—Edric received the sum of five hundred pounds, for which he signed a bond, properly witnessed by two persons, who chanced to be at hand. 'Tis true, he had the precaution to look over the deed, previous to signing his name, that is to say, the preamble thereof; which being couched in the proper law style, and expressing the sum of five hundred pounds, and no more, he doubted not but all was as it should be, and the

the old gentleman being rather in a hurry, he hastily put his name to the instrument, pocketed the cash, and withdrew, in high spirits. Joining this sum to the hundred he had before won of the Baron, he now discharged his debt of honour with a very gallant air, satisfied that the vast fortune of his future bride would soon replace so trifling a sum—nor did his Lordship wound the delicacy of the family, by discovering the smallest reluctance to take the money, which doubtless would have implied an idea, which they by no means wished him to entertain.

LETTER

LETTER XIII.

WE have now to accompany the two noble families to Seaforth Hall, where they arrived in perfect safety. Mr. Seaforth having understood the exalted rank of his guests, received them with all imaginable respect, though as to the grand end of the visit he was yet uninformed. Scarcely had he paid the proper compliments, when

when burning to give his lady a proof of his skill in manœuvring, similar to that with which she meant to surprise him, he beckoned her aside, and thus, with a look of exultation, began:

“Sure, my dear, we are the luckiest people upon earth—since you went from home such a stroke of good fortune——”

“What is it pray?” impatiently interrupting him.

“Our daughter Julia has made a conquest of young Hanbury.”

“And

“ And is that (disdainfully) your stroke of good fortune ? ”

“ Is it not so ?—a young fellow who is himself getting a fortune as fast as possible, and must hereafter succeed to the large estates of the old man ; and besides, I have taken proper advantage of this love fit, by demanding such conditions as will be of the greatest benefit to all the rest of our family.”

“ You have treated with them then on the business ? ”

“ Why, yes, love—an offer
so

so far above our hopes encouraged me to do so, without waiting your return ; and when you know my conditions——”

“ Talk not to me of conditions, mean wretch—to think of matching your daughter with a tradesman. Upon my life, if I did not well know your extraction, I should think you were descended from such low creatures yourself—what a vulgar soul possesses thy body.”

“ Softly, dear—what is there so much amiss in this matter?—I am sure ’tis such an opportunity
of

of benefitting our circumstances, as we never can have again."

"Hold your foolish tongue, and be thankful you have a wife of more understanding than yourself? Let me tell you, Sir, the illustrious Baron Wesmar condescends to demand our girl, and also to give his noble sister in marriage to Edric. What think you of this?—a family almost as old as the flood, and a fortune for a Prince."

"Hah!—are you certain of this, my dear?"

"Yes, absolutely certain—
6 therefore

therefore let me hear no more of such contemptible wretches as the Hanburys, but think of receiving the honour intended us as you ought?"

"Oh, my dear, I am all submission—but hark ye, child?"

"Well, what now?"

"You are quite certain these great folks are what they say?"

"To be sure I am, fool, or do you think I would have formed a connexion with them?"

"No, to be sure, my life, you would not—I am quite satisfied."

They

They now adjourned to the Hall, where a handsome supper awaited. Mr. Seaforth being in admirable spirits, was extremely gallant to the Lady Teresa, whom he complimented by saying, that he was glad his son possessed so good a taste as his choice of her Ladyship demonstrated.

“ You always thought me an idiot, I believe, (cried Edric, sullenly) but I find at last you suspect the contrary.”

“ Faith, boy, (resumed the old gentleman) I give thee credit for this last stroke of address—had I been

I been a young man, I would have had a tilting-bout with any one who should have rivalled me with my Lady Terefa."

This, however, was affirming more than he dared stand to—for a severe look from his lady obliged him to lower his key, and he added, by way of amendment, "that is, Madam, if my wife had not been in the way."

Her Ladyship, who was all sweetness, declared he was the most agreeable old gentleman she had ever met with, and surely the woman must be vastly happy who

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should have the good fortune to make one of the family : She then added something in French, but perceiving that language was not understood by the company, pursued her discourse in broken English, and every body thought her the most entertaining creature in the universe. Edric was in raptures, and having freely plied the old port, was unusually loquacious—in short, before this happy party separated for the night, it was resolved, that the weddings should take place the day after the morrow.

It must be observed, that
Julia

Julia being really fatigued with her journey, had obtained permission to retire to her chamber soon after her arrival. Mr. and Mrs. Seaforth could not retire to rest before they had held some conversation with their daughter, whom they found sitting pensively at the window of her apartment, watching the progress of the silent moon. She was, in fact, unhappy, yet scarcely conscious of the cause, for she was yet to learn the destiny which awaited her—she was now, however, for the first time, apprized of the honour intended her by Baron Wesmar, and also told that one day only would

elapse before she would become his wife. Mrs. Seaforth's conduct had indeed expressed that she did not expect such a piece of intelligence would be received by her daughter with the utmost satisfaction, neither the Baron's person or age being likely to engage the affections of so young a creature, and therefore she probably expected to meet with some opposition to the measure—but the exquisite distress which poor Julia now evinced was far beyond what she had conceived to happen.—Vain, however, were tears and entreaties, the hearts of both parents were inexorable to her prayers,

ers,

ers, and they at length quitted the room in the greatest indignation, vowing that no consideration whatever should induce them to delay the ceremony even one hour.

The young lady, now alone, gave full vent to her grief—nothing in nature could be more odious to her, than was the idea of Baron Wefmar, as a husband. She had indeed, from the first, conceived an entire disgust to his person and manners, and nothing but the authority of a mother could have induced her to endure his company. It is not to be
E 3 doubted,

doubted, but that had she entertained no fond remembrance of another, she would have felt an invincible repugnance to becoming the wife of his Lordship—Frank Hanbury, however, was, and long had been, the object of her tenderest regard, but perhaps she was never fully sensible of the strength of that sentiment, 'till the moment she was required to accept the hand of Baron Wefmar. . It may be supposed her situation, during the rest of the night, was not very enviable—the only consolation she could propose to herself, and that a very slender one, in the present case, was the pouring

ing her sorrows into the friendly bosom of Mrs. Hanbury; but on leaving her room pretty early, with the intention of going immediately to Rose-Hill, she was stopped by her mother, who expressly forbade her ever to visit that family more. At the usual time the family met at breakfast, when the conversation consisted of mutual felicitations on the approaching marriages, and plans for the future regulation of affairs. Julia was to accompany the Baron to his Castle in Poland, and Lady Teresa and her husband to reside at Seaforth Hall. Settlements were indeed unnecessary, the Sea-

forth Estate being entailed on Edric, and that of Lady Teresa, of course, must belong to their future issue, for she was so generous as to wave all selfish regards. The Baron, with a charming disinterestedness, disclaiming the idea of a fortune with his mistress, it was supposed he would not think of accepting the trifling sum bequeathed her by her aunt. Had he been a very attentive lover, it is probable he would have been hurt at the coldness, and visible uneasiness, of the young lady; but he was past the romance of life, and, to say the truth, was rather formal

formal than warm in his addresses.

The remainder of this day was passed in the gayest manner, and vast were the preparations going forward for the celebrating the nuptials of the respective pairs, with all possible eclat; nor did the happy company break up 'till late in the evening. Edric and his charming Teresa then parted, with the ardour of two transported lovers, whom the succeeding morning would unite, beyond the power of fate. The Baron led his destined bride to the door of her

her apartment, respectfully kissed her hand, and retired.

Rapid as old time is universally allowed to fly, it is probable that, on this occasion, he was accused of tardiness. At length, however, Aurora came to unbar the gates of day, and ten minutes beyond this not a soul was to be found in their beds at Seaforth Hall, if indeed we except Julia, who did not discover any impatience to join the happy group.—Lady Teresa was elegantly dressed, and even by an unimpassioned spectator, must have been pronounced a very charming woman.

Never

Never had the Hall exhibited a scene of so much hilarity before. The Baron, whose eyes expressed as much fire as orbs of their diminutive size could be supposed to do, was impatient for the appearance of his lovely bride—he walked under her chamber window, singing “*Evillez vous par belle endormie,*” without seeming to have excited her attention in the least—he repeated the notes, but with no more success than before: At length Mrs. Seaforth went to her daughter’s apartment, not entirely pleased with her disrespectful delay—but, alas, the lady was flown——

Inexpressible

Inexpressible was now the consternation of all parties. Search was in vain—for Julia had, in fact, given way to the dictates of despair, and taken the resolution to elope from her family, rather than submit to a marriage which, in her imagination, was replete with a thousand horrors. As no one in the family had observed the least intimation of her design, it was impossible to form any conjectures as to the route she might have taken. In the midst of the bustle, which such an event would naturally occasion, Mr. Hanbury was seen coming towards the house—"Oh, Sir, (cried Mrs.

Seaforth) can you give any intelligence of my daughter?"

"Upon my honour, Madam, I cannot," answered he, in a very laconic manner. There was something, she thought, rather unpropitious in his aspect, and to prevent too abrupt a disclosure of what he might be about to say, she desired her husband to take the gentleman into the farther parlour; but not being without a sufficient quantity of curiosity in her composition, and perhaps foreboding no good, from the unexpected presence of a man whom she mortally hated, it was not long before
she

she herself followed, and, on entering the room, heard Mr. Hanbury pronounce the following words, in a resolute tone:

“You know perfectly well, Sir, that as long as Miss Lavington lives, your son can marry no other woman, without venturing an unpleasant consequence.”

“What is all this (cried Mrs. Seaforth, in a rage)?—let me tell you, Mr. Hanbury, you are vastly impertinent, to meddle thus with other people’s affairs—but it was ever your character.”

“And

“ And I trust, Madam, ever will be, as long as that meddling can serve the cause of the injured and unfortunate.”

“ Aye, aye, fine cant, but it won't do with us—so, Sir, you may acquaint Miss Lavington, that we despise her claims and menaces.”

“ Very well, Madam—I am answered.”

“ Stay, stay, Mr. Hanbury,” cried Mr. Seaforth, catching him by the arm. “ My dear, (to his wife) pray do return to the company :

pany:—If they should guess any thing of this business (added he, in a whisper) it is all over with us.”

Here the lady flounced out of the room, and Mr. Seaforth, with a temporizing intent, forced Mr. Hanbury to a chair, and then said,

“Is there no possibility of compromising this matter, neighbour?—or will nothing satisfy Miss Lavington but Edric’s marrying her?”

“I am convinced (answered he)

he) she despises him as much as he deserves of her."

"Why, to be sure, it was a foolish affair on his part."

"Call it a wicked one, Mr. Seaforth, and I and all the world shall agree with you?"

"Well, well—but let you and I settle it, if possible. Suppose—let me see—I was to purchase this idle paper, which you say she has, with a good round sum?"

"I am assured she would despise the base suggestion—but
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there is one condition on which I will engage to use my influence with her, to forego all farther claim."

"Hah, my dear friend, (shaking him by the hand) now you talk like the good man which every body says you are—Say what the condition is?"

"Only be honest, Mr. Seaforth, and do that voluntarily which the law will shortly compel you to do—resign those securities which you have, relating to Miss Lavington's fortune?"

Here

Here Mr. Seaforth paused a few moments, to consider whether it would be best to comply with this very reasonable request, or leave the lady a right to sue hereafter for damages, which he supposed the law would award proportionate to Lady Teresa's ample fortune; besides, with respect to the effects of Miss Lavington, he had no doubt but they would shortly be legally wrested out of his hands—he replied therefore, with a joy which he could not conceal, “And will this be accepted, Mr. Hanbury?”

“Look’e, Sir, (answered that gentleman, in a firm accent) I am a steadfast friend to justice, but an enemy to revenge. Great as are the injuries which Miss Lavington hath experienced from your family, I hope she is so good a Christian as to accept your restitution, as the only satisfaction now to be demanded—but where an offender refuses such restitution, when in his power, I am for prosecuting such hardened villany with legal rigour.”

This declaration had a final effect. Mr. Seaforth instantly went to his ’scrutoire, and took out

out every paper which respected the affairs of his quondam ward, for indeed he had always kept them bundled together for their better concealment. These he delivered into Mr. Hanbury's hands, with many acknowledgments of the sense he entertained of his goodness, in thus condescending to mediate in the disagreeable affair, all which tended to evince the natural pusillanimity of guilt.

After Mr. Hanbury's departure, a conversation ensued between the husband and wife, in which it appeared that they were both entirely satisfied, that all their ap-
 F 3 prehensions

prehenſions reſpecting Miſs Lavington's future claims were ſo eaſily removed. That fortune which they had ſo iniquitouſly detained, might now be ſpared, without any inconvenience to their finances, which were in a fair way of being unſpeakably benefitted by the acquiſition of Lady Tereſa's prodigious wealth; and they heartily rejoiced, that a tranſaction, ſo little to the credit of their ſon, and which, if known to the lady, muſt doubtleſs have ruined the buſineſs, was thus quietly huſhed up: Nor was Mr. Hanbury at all leſs pleaſed with the ſucceſs of his negotiation—the
fact

fact was, Miss Lavington was at that time in a very declining state of health, nor was it expected she had long to remain in a world, which the indiscretions of her youth had rendered so bitter to her. With this prospect before her eyes, she felt a thousand anxieties with respect to her infant son, who was now about to become an orphan, without the smallest means of support. She well knew, that could she bequeath her own fortune to the child, the circumstances of his ignominious birth would be little considered by the multitudes who are ever ready to favour those who stand least in

need of assistance—but the hopeless delay of a Chancery suit left her little room to hope she should have it in her power to give the poor infant that proof of maternal regard which she wished to do. These considerations induced Mr. Hanbury to act, as we find he did, on the only occasion in which he could possibly have been successful, for so little were the Seaforths penetrated by any sense of their cruelty and injustice towards that unhappy girl, that it is certain nothing but the dread of Lady Teresa's becoming acquainted with the circumstance, together with the prospect of speedily possessing

feeling her Ladyship's spacious domains in Poland, could possibly have induced them to restore Miss Lavington her just rights one moment sooner than the Court of Chancery would have compelled them so to do.

During the visit above mentioned, Edric Seaforth and his fair mistress had wisely resolved, that the elopement of Julia ought not to be considered as an impediment to their immediate union—Mrs. Seaforth readily concurred in the same opinion, nor could the Baron, who appeared much chagrined by his disappointment, alledge

ledge any thing in opposition to it. To church then they repaired, where the Rev. Dr. Arlington solemnly united Mr. Edric Seaforth to the most noble Lady Teresa, sister of the illustrious Baron Wesmar, of the Royal line of Sobieski.

LETTER

LETTER XIV.

MR. and Mrs. Hanbury having promised a visit to their son, were inclined to execute it somewhat sooner than they had probably intended to do, by the impatience they now felt to impart to Miss Lavington the only tidings which could now afford her delight. They found that unfortunate young lady in the last stage of a
consumption,

consumption, the progress of which no medical efforts could suppress—she had indeed been attended by the most eminent physicians in London, for Frank Hanbury, as well in pursuance of the dictates of his own benevolence, as in obedience to the commands of his parents, had suffered her to want nothing that could in any manner contribute to her health, ease, or convenience. At the entrance of Mr. and Mrs. Hanbury her pale cheeks were suffused with a glow of pleasure—she took the hand of her little boy, gently put it in that of Mr. Hanbury, and then burst into a flood of
of

of tears. "I understand you, my dear lady, (cried that worthy man) be assured I will be a father to the dear child, and when I am called from performing the pious trust, my son Frank will succeed to it, with a heart as warm as my own. But I have news which will revive your spirits—in a few days perhaps the Chancery suit will be at an end, and you will have justice done you."

She shook her head, as if to say I shall never live to see that day; and Mr. Hanbury, by his looks, consulted his wife, whether it were proper to proceed with
the

the intelligence, which he feared would agitate her beyond what her weak condition would well bear—Mrs. Hanbury, rightly judging there was no time to be lost, took up her husband's discourse, and, in the gentlest manner possible, acquainted her that her fortune was now in her own power. The poor lady uttered a fervent ejaculation to heaven, and then embracing her child, said, "I shall now, my poor boy, have it in my power to leave thee what will place thee above the reach of the world's scorn, though it can never wipe off the ignominy which attends thy mother's name. Oh,

Oh, Mrs. Hanbury, to your charge I commit the formation of my son's moral character, and well I know, that to a mind like yours the task will not be unwelcome."

She then desired an attorney might be sent for, and having made her will, by which she entrusted her child to the guardianship of Mr. Hanbury, who cheerfully undertook the charge, she seemed a little revived; but her gratitude to the Hanburys was so profound, that she would not be restrained from dwelling on the theme of their goodness, which she mingled with such warm and
pathetic

pathetic acknowledgements, that partly to avoid the subject of panegyric, which though none more truly deserved, yet none were less disposed to bear, and partly to relieve the lady herself, they took leave of her for that day, and retired to their son's house.

Here they found an old and much esteemed acquaintance waiting their return. The tears glistened in Mr. Manners' eyes when he shook his friend by the hand, and cordially welcomed the arrival of him and his lady to town, "and yet (added he) I am sick of it too—were my wife as willing to

retire from business as I have long been, I should e'er now have followed your example."

"It were a pity to deprive the town (said Mrs. Hanbury) of the benefit of your lady's example—a few such respectable characters are necessary to keep virtue and prudence in countenance."

Mr. Manners only shook his head—he had not indeed found the yoke of hymen a very pleasant one—for though the chastity and prudence of his wife had always been unimpeachable, her temper was intolerable. Covetousness

was her governing passion, and money her idol, in which propensities she was the very reverse of her husband, and consequently but little calculated to render him compleatly happy—however, as he was one of the best natured men in the world, he submitted almost implicitly to her will, tho' often at the expence of his better judgment, and always at that of his peace. In the course of the visit he said his daughter was now returned from the country, and would in future reside in town, to which Mr. Hanbury replied, that he had then a pleasure in store which he did not expect—"I shall

shall hasten (said he) to pay my respects to my dear god-daughter."

"I wish (resumed Mr. Manners) she stood in a nearer relation to you—to say the truth, I have been casting about in order to find a proper husband for my girl, whose education you know has been very different to that of most young women. My sister, who is a sensible good woman, has taken great pains to render Charlotte every thing a young woman ought to be, and, if I do not flatter myself, with some success. As I am known to be rich, I am afraid

some needy scoundrel of quality may fall in my daughter's way, and I had rather follow her to the grave than to the church with such an one. Now, friend Hanbury, to be plain with you, I wish her the wife of your Frank, who, on my conscience, is a worthy lad."

"And I assure you (answered Mr. Hanbury) I should promote such an alliance with all my power—but having said this I can go no farther."

Both the old gentlemen had now their eyes fixed on Frank, whose

whose countenance discovered rather more of pain than pleasure—he arose, and with a modest air addressing Mr. Manners, said, “It is impossible I can be insensible to the perfections and singular merit of Miss Manners, or of the honor which you, Sir, have condescended to intimate, but were my affections totally free, which at present I cannot with truth affirm, I could not attempt to supersede the pretensions of another, and that person my bosom friend.”

“Pretensions of another! (reiterated Mr. Manners, with some surprise) has then my daughter engaged

gaged her affections without my knowledge?"

"You must not infer that, Sir — I do not imagine that Miss Manners is herself apprized of my friend's passion; but called on as I am for a candid avowal of my sentiments, I am obliged to confess, that I could not in honour aspire to the hope you generously allow me, while conscious of the attachment of another."

"I love your honesty, young gentleman, and this proof of it makes me wish to call you son more than ever—but what, I be-

seech you, and who is this friend?"

"You recollect the young officer who was with me some time since?"

"Captain Seaforth, I presume—my daughter has engaged herself to him?"

"I did not say *that*, my dear Mr. Manners—'tis true he made me the confidante of his sentiments, but I believe his principles are too noble to permit him to avow them to the lady herself."

"Why so?"

G 4

"Because

“ Because, though one of the best young fellows in the world, he is not in circumstances to offer himself to your daughter, Sir.”

Here Mr. and Mrs. Hanbury spoke very highly of the character of William Seaforth, and lamented the unworthy treatment he had received from his family. Mr. Manners attended to this in silence—what he thought of the matter no one present could form any judgment—he thanked young Hanbury for his candour, and declared he should ever entertain the highest esteem for him; and after

after some conversation of a different nature, took his leave.

As the two families had lived for many years in a habit of intimacy, they shortly after dined together at Mr. Manners' house—the two ladies, though extremely good neighbours, were entirely dissimilar in their characters—Mrs. Hanbury was a woman of liberal education, generous in her disposition, elevated in her principles—Mrs. Manners was the reverse of it all. Her chief merit consisted in good housewifery, where indeed she discovered, on most occasions, a sordid parsimony, without

our displaying any ideas beyond her own fire side, for which reason the young lady, whom Mrs. Hanbury was particularly pleased with, must have felt her residence at home rather unpleasant. She was indeed a most amiable girl—besides the being mistress of every polite accomplishment, her sentiments evinced a fund of good sense, generosity, and feeling. At table she inquired of Frank when he had heard from his friend.

“ Very lately, Madam.”

“ He is well, I presume,” in an accent which seemed to say—
And

And has he made no mention of me ?

During these interrogatories, Mr. Manners had attentively marked the turn of his daughter's countenance, and therefrom drew a conclusion, that the Captain was far from being indifferent to her.

“ You mean, I suppose, (said her mother) the young man who visited here some time since with Mr. Frank Hanbury—pray, Sir, is he a gentleman of fortune ?”

“ I hope, Madam, (answered he)

he) he is in a fair way of making one—he possesses great merit.”

“ His merit, I presume, (returned the old lady, with a contemptuous air) lies in a finart shoulder knot and cockade—to say the truth, I never had much opinion of the merit which is unaccompanied with money.”

“ Were these always your sentiments, my dear?” said Mr. Manners, archly.

“ Oh, child, you know there is a difference between youth and age—when we are young we certainly

tainly have not the prudence of maturer years."

"Call that principle by its proper name, my dear mamma, (cried Charlotte, laughing) and we young people shall agree with you?"

Though there was nothing in this reply more than one of those lively rejoinders which keep up the vivacity of a conversation, and certainly nothing intended which could border in the least on disrespect, yet Mrs. Manners was highly displeased at it, and in an angry tone said,

"Why,

“Why, Miss Pert, I hope you have not discovered the *great merit* of this young man.”

“I trust, Madam, (answered she) I shall rely on yours and my father’s judgment for deciding points of that nature.”

This reply set all to rights again, and eased Mrs. Hanbury as well as the rest of the company, of their apprehensions, lest what at first appeared mere chit-chat, should have been followed by disagreeable consequences to the young lady. Just then a card was delivered to Mr. Manners, who having read it, gave it to his wife,

wife, saying at the same time,
 “ Young Stanley I find then is
 arrived.”

Mrs. Manners expressed great
 pleasure at the intelligence, but it
 was observed, that the counte-
 nance of Charlotte suddenly set-
 tled in a deep gloom.

When the Hanburys returned
 home, which they did not do till
 the evening had been spent with
 much conviviality, Mrs. Hanbury
 said to her son,

“ I am so much pleased with
 Charlotte Manners, Frank, that
 I own,

I own, as matters have turned out, I wish you had never seen Julia Seaforth."

"So do I, my dear Madam, though then my friend's attachment must have utterly prevented my pretensions to that lady—but why I regret the latter circumstance which you mention is, that I feel my affection for Miss Seaforth will totally disqualify me for becoming sensible to the merits of another woman."

"I hope not so, my boy, (cried his father) you have assured me of your resolution to forego any farther

ther proceedings in that affair, and indeed I think a regard both to your honour and happiness, must forbid you to resume them—but surely this cannot be a reason why you should refrain from entering that state of life, which my own experience leads me to believe the only one where human happiness is properly found.”

“ I believe, my dear, (resumed Mrs. Hanbury, we shall do best to observe a strict silence on this point, for some time to come. We must respect the workings of a tender and generous heart—and though we wish our son to marry,

yet neither you nor I would precipitate that event one moment sooner than his own amiable mind accords with."

As there seldom passed a day in which there was not an intercourse, in some mode or other, between this family and that of the Manners'—they soon understood that the Mr. Stanley, whose arrival had on the former evening been announced, was the only son of a wealthy planter in the West Indies—that the young gentleman had, even from infancy, been considered as the future husband of Charlotte, by the parents on both sides,
be-

between whom there had been for many years a large commercial intercourse, though in treating of so eligible a measure, Mr. Manners had always included the proviso of the young people's approving of each other. Charles Stanley was now come to England avowedly to make his addresses to the lady in propria personæ, though a subordinate motive to the visit was unquestionably the love of pleasure, for which no man alive had ever a keener relish—he was a very licentious character, but generous in the extreme, according to the ideas of those who confine the meaning of that word to the

placing a very slight value on money. In conversation he appeared perfectly unreserved, tho' he had the address to disguise the most profligate principles, under the specious mask of refinement, and liberality of sentiment. Without any very scrupulous examination, whether the gentleman in question were calculated to make a proper husband to her daughter, Mrs. Manners considered merely that he was the only child of parents whose riches were immense, and therefore no sooner was he arrived than she gave him such a reception as fully evinced her hearty resolution to enforce the measure which

which so long before had been concerted; and so much did she now set her heart on promoting the match, that even the most unexceptionable offers could not have altered her determination in favour of Stanley. Mr. Manners, who, for peace-sake, had long resigned the supremacy in his own family, was not so much enamoured of the character and behaviour of the lover, which he thought had somewhat of the libertine cast, neither did he wish to controul the choice of his beloved Charlotte, but finding the matter was irrevocably fixed by the reigning power, he acquiesced in silence, not without

the belief, however, that the lady herself would discover sufficient spirit to reject an alliance which she disapproved—but in this he demonstrated rather a knowledge of human nature in general, than of the real character of his daughter. Charlotte, during the course of her education, under the care of her aunt in the country, had acquired the most solid principles of piety, which she thought would be infringed, without a strict obedience to the precept of honouring our parents; for, in her idea, the due discharge of relative duties, of which this is certainly the first, formed a constituent part of religion

religion—the good girl therefore, from the positive assurance of her mother, and the complacency with which her father seemed to consider her marriage with Stanley, could not but be convinced that a repugnance on her part would be received both with displeasure and concern by them both. Besides, she had heard the solemn contract, agreed to long since by the several parents, descanted on in so serious a light, that she was led to consider herself as, at least so far bound by the covenant, that it was not in her power equitably to annul it without the consent of her father and mother—how far

such an opinion was right in itself, or would have been allowed weight with the generality of mankind, need not here be determined—it is sufficient to observe, that Charlotte Manners had her scruples of conscience, and whenever that was the case, it was always her rule to proceed in that line of conduct in which appeared the least hazard of trespassing against moral rectitude. However we must venerate the principles of this young lady, we must, in the present instance, regret its consequence; not only as Captain Seaforth was undoubtedly the object of her tenderest affections, but because Charles Stanley was,

was, and would have been absolutely disliked by her, had William Seaforth never existed. Her penetration enabled her to discover that the free unreserved carriage and conversation of the West Indian resulted merely from levity, and might therefore very well comport with a considerable degree of art—she was herself of a generous disposition, but that which the world called so in him she rightly knew to be the effect of a vain dissipated temper, which seemed possessed neither of steadiness nor sensibility, sufficient to form a continuation of domestic happiness—besides the passion he professed

fessed for herself, had in it, she thought, more the impetuosity of appetite, than the permanent attachment of reason—it wanted delicacy, and when opposed to the tender, modest, timid attentions of Seaforth, certainly appeared in a very disgusting light.

The struggles which all these reflections excited in her mind, had an obvious effect on her whole person—her countenance was no longer the picture of content—her temper lost its former agreeable vivacity—yet fearful to occasion pain to those she loved and honoured, prevented her from discovering

discovering her chagrin so much at home as abroad. Mrs. Hanbury very readily perceived the change, and even hinted it to Charlotte herself, with as much freedom as good manners admitted of, but she appeared not inclined to improve those overtures to a more free communication of her sentiments. This good lady indeed certainly comprehended the motive of her uneasiness, and with a view of devising some means of relief, had sought to render her explicit on the subject—but as Miss Manners did not think it right to entrust even her most valued acquaintance with her sentiments,

ments, respecting a man who was hereafter to become her husband, the other judged it improper to urge the point, and therefore was obliged to pity a distress which it was not in her power to alleviate.

LETTER

LETTER VI.

ABOUT this time, and during Mr. and Mrs. Hanbury's stay in town, Frank received a letter from Captain Seaforth, the contents of which were as follow :

“ Do you know, Frank, what is become of the poor run away Julia, whose elopement you are doubtless apprized of by this time,

as

as well as the occasion of it—how my infatuated mother could think of sacrificing so sweet a young creature to the horrid figure of an old Polish Baron, is to me astonishing; and yet why should it be so, you will ask, since her ridiculous passion for antiquity of descent would lead her, I am persuaded, to worship a rotten plank of Noah's Ark, could she meet with it, for the sake of its antiquity. Well, but all this time what is become of the poor girl, whose happiness was to be the price of such folly?—Why, strange to tell, she is in Ireland—true, as you are alive, Hanbury. Admire

the force of female resolution, and agree with me, that when a woman seriously resolves, she is capable of atchieving any thing—here has this poor affrighted creature, who had scarcely before gone beyond the confines of her father's park, travelled a long journey; almost from one extremity of the kingdom to the other, with no guide or counsellor but her own resolution, and at length braving the deep, entrusting herself, wholly unattended and unknown, to the care of a parcel of sailors, landing in a distant kingdom, and all to escape a marriage with a man she abhorred.

“Not

“ Not having heard a syllable of what had been passing at the Hall, you will judge my surprise at her arrival—indeed my discovery thereof was attended with some curious circumstances, as I will inform you. Returning to my lodgings one night, about ten o’clock, I heard my own name mentioned, by some persons who were at a small distance—curiosity induced me to make a stop, and I then heard one say distinctly—“ She said her name was Seaforth, and that she was sister to our Captain.”—This you will suppose was sufficient to prompt me to farther inquiry—in short, I found
from

from these men, who were privates, belonging to my own company, that a few days before a young woman, from England, had inquired for me—that the Colonel, who had chanced to be within hearing, had answered her interrogatories, and she had immediately followed him, which imperfect intelligence was all I was able to collect from these persons. I went home, deeply musing on what I had heard—Good heavens! was it possible the idea of Julia could enter my brain—indeed it did not—yet from her having mentioned the word sister, I concluded it me, some person com-

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missioned by her to deliver some message or letter—It was therefore incumbent on me to seek an explanation. Early the next morning I waited on the Colonel, who is the very person whom I mentioned to you in a former letter, as my most cordial friend—he was at breakfast—I abruptly told my business, to which I thought he gave very evasive answers, and at length said he had quite forgot the circumstance I alluded to. I was displeased, and my countenance I suppose told him I was so, for after a short pause he asked me, whether I expected a sister from England, to which I replied

in

in the negative—"Why then, (said he) if there was any one inquiring for you, it could only be some kind wench who has thought proper to follow you hither, and therefore you might be glad, I should think, to escape her so easily."—"There is more in it than this, (I replied) and indeed, were it as you suggest, I should scarcely have suspected you, Sir, of so dishonourable a conduct."—"What do you say, young gentleman, (cried he) do you dare to suspect me of dishonourable conduct?"—"Till this hour I never did, (I returned) and you must immediately disclose this secret,

Colonel, if you wish me not to admit such an opinion."

He arose from his chair with an air of resentment, and once or twice laid his hand on his sword, as he traversed the room—at length, with a more friendly aspect, he turned towards me, and said, "D—n it, Seaforth, why should I quarrel with a young fellow, whom I really esteem, for the sake of a strumpet—come with me, I will conduct you to the wench."

We walked out of the house immediately together, and he led
me

me to a genteel house, at the distance of about fifty yards, where, in a pretty apartment on the first floor, he introduced me to a lady, who, in a few minutes he was convinced, was indeed my sister. Oh, Frank, it was Julia herself, and bathed in tears, for finding herself betrayed into the hands of a man whose views she had cause to dread, and without a probability of making me acquainted with her situation, had, as you readily imagine, sunk her into the abyss of wretchedness and despair. The Colonel offered a thousand apologies for his conduct, declared that meeting with so lovely a creature,

and suspecting the plea of her being my sister to be no more than artifice, he could not resist the temptation—but to atone for the error he had been guilty of, he requested me to make use of his assistance, if necessary, in the placing the lady in such a situation as became her character and family. There was no room for me to doubt but what he urged in his defence was strictly true, for, excepting a passion for intrigue, he is as worthy honest a man as breathes. Julia hath assured me that she had seen nothing in his behaviour inconsistent with the nicest rules of decency; though
there

there is reason to conclude, and indeed he himself does not deny, but that he intended finally to prevail on her to become his mistress—but what think you of this same Colonel making honourable proposals to this dear sister of mine—it is true, upon my honour. She cannot possibly object to him, either on the score of fortune, person, or age, for these are perfectly void of exception; and yet I must acknowledge she doth object to him, and from what motive think you?—truly because her affections are engaged to another—even to yourself, my dear Frank; and yet she knows (for I have shewn her

the letter wherein you copy my father's very generous proposals) that you are bound, by honour, not to think of her more. What woman then, in such circumstances, would reject the very eligible proposals of Colonel D——.

“ Yet think not neither, that I am an advocate with her in his behalf—No—I have a scheme in my thoughts to promote the happiness of both of you ; but before I disclose it, I shall briefly touch on my father's letter to you. I know, from the old gentleman's manner of writing, that he was charmed with the offer of your alliance,

liance, and indeed how could it be otherwise, when, both in character and fortune, your family is so much superior to ours—what unaccountable idea possessed him to impose such conditions, as a man of sense and common honesty could not comply with—for as to the first article, it is merely a laughable one; but when he proposes your resigning your future offspring to the tuition of other people, he must, if he reflected at all, suppose you a villain, since none but the most abandoned of the species can be supposed so totally unconcerned as to the welfare and best interests of posterity. I can assure

assure you therefore, that Julia perfectly agrees with me in the opinion, that there was nothing left for you to do but to renounce all thoughts of the alliance—nay, she goes so far as to say, that had you persevered under such ignominious restrictions, she must have deemed you totally unworthy her regard. Now then, my dear Frank, I think an opportunity awaits you of making both my sister and yourself happy, in spite of the avarice or folly of my father—I know that the idea of a clandestine marriage conveys with it something very unsuitable to the respectability of your proposals, yet

yet I see no other way of accomplishing, what I imagine to be your mutual happiness: however, my most dear friend, greatly as I feel myself interested in your felicity, your honour is yet as precious to me as my own, and if that can possibly be wounded by such a step, or there should be any thing implied in this suggestion repugnant to that rectitude and delicacy of mind I know you so eminently possess, I have done. Julia herself suspects not the purport of my letter; and from you I hope at least a ready forgiveness, if I have urged any thing improper, since I beg you to believe, that he who
has

has the most reason to love and esteem you, and really feels the liveliest solicitude for your welfare and happiness, is

Your obliged and grateful

WM. SEAFORTH.

Mrs. Hanbury was no sooner made acquainted with the contents of the above letter, than she said to her husband with a smile,—“I think, my dear, Frank must take a trip to Ireland, and conclude this matrimonial affair.”

“I don’t

"I don't know (replied he) whether that be adviseable."

"The only consequence, my dear Mr. Hanbury, that could attend the measure, is as Captain Seaforth intimates, the avoiding those unworthy restrictions—for as to fortune——

"Nothing will be lost on that score (interrupted he)—but, my love, are you sure that there is nothing dishonest in taking a young woman against the consent of her parents?"

"Not where the advantage,

as in this case, must be entirely on the lady's side—I allow, that to steal a girl for the sake of her fortune is the worst species of theft and dishonesty—but here it can only be the securing a worthy young woman that happiness which the caprice and folly of her parents would deprive her of—there is but one consideration to be urged against such a step, on the part of our son.”

“And what is that, my dear?”

“Perhaps you will call it pride—but I confess I am a little
hurt

hurt at the idea, that a young fellow, whose character and fortune might qualify him for an alliance with the most respectable family in the kingdom, should clandestinely force himself into a family, which in every respect is so far inferior—nay, I think it a contemptible one.”

“ Well, Child, (smiling) since you have shewn yourself casuist sufficient to annihilate every objection but this, I must own to you the last scruple has no weight with me at all—were not the lady herself a being of a very different nature to the family which you
justly

justly style contemptible, I would oppose the marriage with all my power, even though she could bring the mines of Potifi for her portion—but an idle punctilio, too much like the ridiculous propensities of the Seaforths themselves, ought not to impede the happiness of two worthy young people, who never will be truly at ease asunder.”

“ I am satisfied, my dear, (returned the lady) and to say the truth, I did not myself lay any great stress on the argument which you have refuted—we will snatch the dear amiable Julia from the
misery

misery which her parents have devised for her, and we will put her in possession of a happiness which she truly merits."

It may naturally be concluded that the lover wanted no persuasions to improve the hint contained in Captain Seaforth's letter — 'tis true, had Julia continued under the protection of her parents, exposed to no disagreeable persecutions, he would have been very far from urging her to a clandestine marriage with himself, as a measure inconsistent with the filial duty of which he had the highest veneration — but a fugitive,

as she was now become, without the remotest hope of ever being reconciled to her parents, except on the condition of her marrying the man she detested, he conceived it to be a sort of knight errantry, becoming both the ardour of his passion, and his ideas of honour to extricate the lady from so perilous a situation.

Mr. Hanbury's conduct, on this occasion, must be mentioned to his eternal honour—rightly conceiving that no alteration of circumstance can induce an honest man to recede from his word, he determined on adhering strictly to the

the

the proposals which he had formerly authorized his son to make Mr. Seaforth, and therefore caused a marriage settlement to be drawn, by which the same jointure was secured to Julia as had been proposed at the first. When the said instrument was ready, and duly executed, Frank Hanbury took it with him to Ireland, in which kingdom he arrived with all possible expedition, equally to the surprise and satisfaction of the tender Julia, who at length plighted him her willing vows at the sacred altar.

LETTER XVI.

DURING this transaction in the sister kingdom, Mrs. Hanbury and Miss Manners were much together, and at length the sweet affability of the former so effectually won on her young companion, that she disclosed to her the secrets of her whole soul—confessed her aversion to Mr. Stanley, and the conscientious reasons

sons which induced her to give him a favourable reception. Mrs. Hanbury heard, with extreme concern, the confirmation of an opinion, which she had been secretly inclined to entertain: It was in vain, however, that she endeavoured to persuade the young lady to make the same disclosure of her sentiments to her father, on whose tenderness she might rely for redress. Charlotte readily allowed that her father would cease to urge her union with Stanley, the moment he understood its being disagreeable to herself—"but then, (added she) my dear Mrs. Hanbury, what would be the
K 3 consequence ?

consequence?—nothing less than such a rupture between my father and mother, as probably would embitter the whole remainder of their days. My mother, I am convinced, intends my happiness by this match, on which she has entirely set her heart, but then, Madam, her notions of happiness are more closely united with wealth than I could wish them to be; and as she will not condescend to examine the disposition of Stanley so accurately as I have done, it would be impossible to make her think my objections not unreasonable—now, as my father, who well knows her value has been
long

in the habit of yielding to her will any repugnance on my side to the match, would entirely derange their plan of domestic happiness—and surely, surely, (with an amiable emotion) I cannot purchase the gratification of my own humour, at the expence of my parents happiness.”

Here Mrs. Hanbury pressed her to her bosom with maternal tenderness, told her how much she admired the filial piety of her sentiments, but was nevertheless of opinion, that she would be justified in avoiding a marriage which threatened to destroy her future

peace. "You shall go into the country with me, (said she) my dear Charlotte, we shall leave town as soon as my son returns from Ireland—this will at least prove the means of delay, and in the mean time we will consult Mr. Hanbury on something farther to be done ; for indeed, as the character of Stanley is by the best accounts equivocal, you must not hastily resolve on giving him your hand." Miss Manners accepted the invitation with joy, to which she was certain neither of her parents would object.

Mrs. Hanbury had constantly
spent

spent some part of every day with Miss Lavington, when not hindered by any particular affair, and perceived, with concern, that she daily grew worse. Calling one morning at her lodgings, she found a still more visible alteration in her countenance—in short, the hand of death was hastily closing her eyes for ever—she turned on her pillow at hearing the soothing accents of Mrs. Hanbury's voice, and extending her almost lifeless hand, "You are come, my good Madam, (said she) to see the close of a life which your heavenly goodness has rendered sweet—I leave my poor boy—you will be a mother

ther to him, for you have kindly promised."

Mrs. Hanbury comforted her with the kindest assurances, and a reiteration of those promises which Mr. Hanbury and herself had before given. "Enough, (cried Miss Lavington) I die satisfied—let me, for the last time, bless you for all your goodness to an unworthy creature." These effusions of gratitude Mrs. Hanbury would have prevented, but in vain—at length an ineffable transport overspread the countenance of the dying lady—a faint glow suffused her pale cheeks, and with a smile she

she said—" 'Tis come—farewell, best of women—I die in hope—my repentance has been long and sincere—there is mercy—Oh! (grasping Mrs. Hanbury's hand with ardour) oh, Madam, there is mercy."

With these words the beautiful and unfortunate Matilda expired without a groan—and Mrs. Hanbury staid some minutes, shedding over the lifeless corpse those tears which charity and humanity impelled—she then took the little boy in her arms, kissed it with great affection, and after giving the proper orders for the funeral, took him.

him home in her coach, where its infant sorrows were tenderly alleviated, by the parental attentions of that excellent woman, and her no less benevolent spouse.

Some few mornings after this mournful event, the Manners' carriage stopped at the door, and from it issued the fair Charlotte, bathed in tears. "Good heavens, my dear Miss Manners, (cried Mrs. Hanbury) what is the matter?—surely something very dreadful must have happened?"

"Ah, good Madam, it is indeed a dreadful something to me
—nothing

—nothing less than an entire conviction that I must be the wife of Charles Stanley, in spite of those hopes which your conversation led me to entertain.”

“And what particular incident has frustrated those hopes pray, my dear girl?”

“I will tell you, Madam—my mother and myself drove yesterday morning to see an acquaintance in Dover-street—as we were sitting in the front parlour, Stanley’s chariot passed, and stopped at the next door—we saw him alight, and enter without ceremony

remony. A little womanish curiosity induced me to ask the lady we were visiting, what family inhabited the next house?—A very indifferent one, she replied—a certain famous courtezan was the present occupier, then in keeping by the gentleman who had just passed—I made no answer to this piece of intelligence, nor did my mother—but after we were in the carriage, I asked her opinion of this part of Stanley's conduct, and, to my utter astonishment, was answered by a laugh, and some very slight remark on an incident, which, she said, might naturally be expected by an unmarried man

of his large fortune. You may believe, Madam, I was much hurt at my mother's indifference; however, I suppressed any farther remarks on the subject, and believing such a circumstance must effectually prevail over my father's usual passiveness, I apprized him of it—he was both surprised and displeased at the relation on which I ventured to express my dislike to the marriage, and entreated his interference to rid me of so disagreeable an engagement, which he readily promised to do, declaring at the same time, that I could not be more averse to the match than he himself now was.

Pursuant

Pursuant to this promise, he soon after had a long conversation with my mother on the subject, the result of which was, that she vowed never to live with him more, in case my marriage with Mr. Stanley did not take place. My poor father came to me in the greatest emotion—he wiped the tears from his eyes—O, Mrs. Hanbury, could I bear to see a father weep?—In short, I begged him not to hazard his happiness on my account, and promised to give my hand to Stanley whenever my mother required it. Thus you see my destiny is fixed; I am sure to be the most unhappy, yet, alas, I fear the knowledge of
that

that will render one miserable whom I earnestly wish to be happy.—Oh, Madam, had Captain Seaforth this Stanley's fortune, there would be no impediment to my felicity."

This was the first time Charlotte had even intimated a tenderness for that young gentleman, nor did Mrs. Hanbury 'till now suspect he held any place in her affections—the discovery augmented her affliction, inasmuch as it was clear the future uneasiness of Charlotte in the married state would receive additional poignancy from this unpropitious circumstance.

cumstance. Not being able to suggest any thing which might alleviate the distress of Miss Manners, she fell on her neck, and wept tenderly—at length recovering herself, she said, “Do not, however, my sweet girl, consent to an immediate celebration of this marriage, but go with me to Rose Hill, where I trust we shall be able to devise some scheme of preventing it entirely. You know Mr. Hanbury has great influence with both your parents, and I cannot but think he may be serviceable in this affair.”

Small as the hopes which this
proposal

proposal suggested, Miss Manners was a little comforted thereby, and it was agreed that Mrs. Hanbury should immediately solicit her parents consent to the journey, which indeed she did, and also succeeded—the evil day was therefore deferred to a future season.

Mr. and Mrs. Hanbury had now been several months in town, where they had been detained much longer than they intended, by the absence of their son—but now the period of his absence was expired, and they had the pleasure of congratulating him and his charming bride on their arrival in

London. “And have I the supreme satisfaction (cried Mrs. Hanbury, embracing Julia) to fold my sweet girl once more in my arms, and to receive her as my dear, my beloved daughter.”

“Oh, Madam, (returned she kneeling) how soothing is this kind condescension—indeed you know not what I have suffered since last we met, but the pleasure of this sweet hour overpays it all—and yet I fear——”

“What does my Julia fear?”

“That my late conduct has
been

been too reprehensible to entitle me to your esteem, if it can deserve forgiveness—”

“What can you mean, my dear?—If, as we all believe, your regard for our son contributed to strengthen your aversion to the Baron, surely we have cause to be gratified by that part of your conduct, and to applaud your constancy and resolution—however, my dear Julia, be satisfied that you are now one of a family, who all love you, and will think their own happiness promoted by yours.”

Mr. Hanbury advanced to salute his daughter, with the most cordial affection, and gave her many assurances of his paternal tenderness—in short, the happiness of this worthy family was now compleat. Frank was united to the object of his sincerest affection, whose modest virtues were capable of rendering him the happiest of men, while in him she found the tender husband, and the kind friend, whose good sense and amiable qualities were adapted to the delicate task of directing an uninformed, but candid mind—nor was it long before the excellencies of her character shone forth
with

with so distinguished a lustre as endeared her to a large circle of respectable acquaintances.

The deservingly happy parents, weary of the bustle of the town, and impatient to revisit their elegant retirement at Rose-Hill, would not be prevailed on to stay the conclusion of the wedding gala—they took a tender leave of their beloved children, and set out for the country, accompanied by their little charge, George Lavington, who already began to return their friendly cares with filial affection. Miss Manners was prevented from going with Mrs. Hanbury to her

feat, by the indisposition of her mother—however small the obligation that young lady had to a parent, who apparently felt but little of the maternal affection, she would not think of quitting her till her health should be perfectly re-established.

LETTER

LETTER XVII.

THE marriage of Mr. Edric Seaforth had produced an entire revolution in affairs at the Hall, which was no longer the gloomy solitude it had formerly been; but, as might be expected, from the presence of persons of rank and taste, was become a scene of gaiety and festivity. Select parties, or general entertainments, were

were the occurrences of almost every day, and Lady Teresa's vivacity and polite freedom rendered her the soul of the company—nothing was talked of throughout the neighbourhood but the beauty, condescension, and excessive politeness of her Ladyship, who was looked on as the oracle of taste and fashion by the ladies around. The old fashioned furniture of the antique mansion was exchanged for modern—the table was furnished in the most expensive taste, and several spruce footmen added to the former number of domestics. Baron Wesmar having happily surmounted his chagrin on
the

the recent disappointment, was so good as to take up his residence entirely at the Hall, not only from a motive of affection to his sister, but also a profound regard for the Seaforth family. He kept his racers, dogs, and valets—in short, by an accommodating temper, his Lordship seemed quite as much at home, as though he had been in his own castle in Poland, to which, if a judgment could be formed, from the complacency he felt in his present situation, he discovered no anxiety to return. It might perhaps be imagined, from the characteristic rusticity of Edric, that his temper and habits would
render

render him an unsuitable partner to a woman of Lady Teresa's elegant accomplishments, but, in justice to him, it must be owned, that the natural acerbity of his disposition had hitherto been kept within the bounds of passive obedience to his Lady's will, in every thing, which effect the presence of his noble brother-in-law might not a little have contributed to; and, for the same reason, his mode of living, diversions, &c. were exactly conformable to the taste of the reigning powers. Mrs. Seaforth herself demonstrated equal pliability in adapting the opinions and manners of her illustrious relations,

lations, infomuch that the grave matron of fifty was lost in the gaiety of sixteen.

W—— races being at hand, it was agreed that the family party should attend that amusement, which usually drew together a large number of the nobility and gentry of the neighbouring countries. Mr. Seaforth alone remained at the Hall—indeed his age and inclination had prevented him from taking an active share in those pleasures which engrossed every other branch of his household. At W——, Lady Teresa found herself surrounded with a gaiety and splendor

splendor which greatly delighted her—the number of elegant carriages on the course, and the concourse of well dressed persons of both sexes, which crowded the ball-room in the evening, gave her a flow of spirits, which not all the amusements at the Hall had been seen to excite. The attention of the gentlemen was particularly attracted by the beauty and wit of her Ladyship—in fact, it was rather too pointed for the feelings of an English husband, but Edric had learnt to consider that part of his Lady's conduct, which some would have called levity, as the effect of a refined education, and
an

an intimacy with people of rank—a trifling incident, however, had like to have destroyed the equanimity of his temper in this respect.

Her Ladyship feeling some indisposition on the last ball-night, quitted the room much sooner than usual, accompanied only by Mrs. Seaforth. Edric, as she knew, having adjourned to the tavern, in order to sup with two or three brother fox-hunters—happening, however, to return to his lodgings at an earlier hour than was expected, he was told his lady was gone to bed much indisposed—the anxiety of a tender
4 husband

husband must in such a case have superseded the restraints of etiquette, and he accordingly went hastily up stairs, but, to his great astonishment, was met at the chamber door by a gentleman, who, both by person and dress, he well remembered to have seen very familiar with his Lady, both on the race ground, and at the ball. The eclaircissement perhaps not being entirely to the satisfaction of Edric, he gave the gallant so discourteous a thrust with his foot, as sent him by one motion from the top of the stairs to the bottom—the bustle which such an incident must occasion,

WAS

was sufficient to draw Mrs. Seaforth from her repose, who, huddling on a night gown, came to demand the occasion of it—at the same instant also Baron Wesmar entered the house—great was now the clamour, confusion, and surprise. Mrs. Seaforth, with all her foibles, was a woman of the purest chastity; it is therefore extremely probable, that such an event excited in her a real indignation, but whatever were her feelings, she thought proper to suppress them; for Lady Teresa scorned to enter on any defence of her conduct, and the Baron in great wrath vowing to be revenged

on any one who but intimated a suspicion of his sister's honour, the consequences might have been fatal, had not that prudent mother exerted herself in pacifying the rage of her son—she prudently took him aside, and told him he must consider the incident as entirely innocent in itself, for that nothing was more common in France than for gentlemen to enter the female apartments without ceremony, though nobody suspected any thing improper in such freedom. By such arguments she at length moderated the choler of Edric, who notwithstanding swore, that no wife of his should follow
such

such outlandish customs—he was prevailed on, however, to ask pardon of his offended lady, and her brother, and thus ended an affair which at first threatened a more ungentle conclusion.

While these matters were passing at W——, an event of a more gloomy nature occurred at Seaforth Hall. The old gentleman was one morning sitting in the parlour, when, in the adjoining room, which was that in which the steward settled his accounts, he overheard some very loud discourse, and a strange voice uttering threats and remonstrances

M 2 alternately.

alternately. When the noise had ceased, Mr. Seaforth rang for the steward, to demand the occasion of what had passed—this person, who was almost the only domestic which the Baron and his sister had not caused to be displaced, came into the room, with tears glistening in his eyes, and with the most evident tokens of grief informed his master, that a grocer, of the neighbouring town, had been impatiently demanding the payment of his bill—“ And why did not you pay him then?” said Mr. Seaforth, with a look of displeasure. The steward made no
reply

reply—"I say why did you not pay the man his demand?"

"If your honour will please to inform me where I can get the money, I would do it."

"What do you mean?—Have you not cash in your hand?"

"Not a penny, your honour."

"How so?—have not the tenants paid their rents duly?"

"Yes, yes, and for the next year to come, but all won't do."

Here Mr. Seaforth turned pale, and immediately commanded the steward to out with all which he seemed to have in his mind—

“Why then, Sir, (resumed he) if I must speak out, the matter is this—Since these foreigners came among us, your honour knows things have been mainly changed, and bills of course ran high—besides, Madam ordered me to let my Lord, the Baron, have what money he had occasion for, and that has been pretty considerable, as my books will shew—Well then you see I had no remedy but to take up the next year’s rent, of as many as would, or could, advance

vance it; and, to say the truth, the tenants were most of them pretty good to me, for they know I was never hard with them when I could help it. Now, your honour, this money is all gone, and many heavy bills left due."

"How much do you suppose might be due?"

"About three hundred pounds, your honour."

"Three hundred! (exclaimed Mr. Seaforth) and no money to come in these two years—three hundred!—but you may go—

M 4

I will

I will ring when I want you farther."

The steward immediately withdrew, and Mr. Seaforth, being alone, fell into a most violent paroxysm of grief and rage—curled the late marriage—himself—the foreigners—and, in short, the whole world. Before this peevish humour had evaporated, the grocer paid a second visit, insisting on seeing the 'Squire himself, and, without giving time for his arrival to be announced, impatiently burst into the room where Mr. Seaforth was sitting, and abruptly asked for his money. "What occasion,

caſion, fellow, (answered the other, diſguiſing his chagrin as much as poſſible) is there for this rudeneſs?—Did you ever hear that the Seaforthſ neglected to pay their tradefmen?”

“ Yes, faith have I—ſtep into the next town, and you will find many in the ſame key with myſelf?”

“ They are infamous ſcoundrels then, and I will let them know what they deſerve, for treating a gentleman of family thus—dirty dogs—wretches who
are

are scarcely worthy to breathe the air with people of rank."

"Look'e, Master Seaforth, this sort of language might do in those countries where I am told the rich may use the poor as they like, but in England, thank heaven, we know better—a man that pays his way, and can live without being beholden to others, is as good, for ought I see, as a Lord; and better than your gentlefolks that live at the expence of honest tradesfolks, in pride and idleness—and so, Sir, let me tell you, I will have my money, or the bailiff shall get it for me."

"Friend,

“ Friend, friend, (somewhat alarmed) do you know that my family yields to none in point of blood ?”

“ What care I for that ?”

“ At least you ought to know, that tho’ it may be inconvenient for me to discharge your bill just now, yet you may rely on my honour—the honour of a true gentleman.”

“ D—n honour—my family won’t get fat upon words; neither will this cant stock my shop, nor pay my tradesmen when they come
round

round however, I shall waste no more time at this rate—a certain gentleman shall talk with you, and you will hear his opinion of this same honour.”

With this threat the grocer withdrew, with as little ceremony as he had entered, and Mr. Seaforth felt himself in a situation, which must have awakened even pity in a humane breast. A punctuality in discharging his ordinary debts had hitherto been what he had much valued himself upon, as one constituent part of his dignity—to be thus insolently threatened, as he deemed it, by a person infinitely

initely his inferior, and what was a farther humiliating circumstance, without possessing the power of evading those threats, afforded a compleat mortification to his pride. But a still more distressing circumstance was yet to be considered—his finances were totally deranged, and himself ruined—contempt, poverty, a jail must inevitably be his fate, and that at a period when old age, and all its usual infirmities, were coming rapidly on. These reflections preyed so forcibly on his mind, that he was forced to retire, greatly disordered, to his solitary bed, and by day-light was really

really so ill, as to feel impracticable to rise.

The grocer, whom perhaps some reasonable concessions would have mollified, was so much piqued by the opprobrious terms which the other had made use of, that he actually put his menaces in execution, and the poor old gentleman was arrested as he lay ill in bed. The confusion which such an event occasioned in the house, produced somewhat of an extraordinary effect—the servants, who were mostly a new set, concluding that the family was now irretrievably ruined, resolved to make the

the best of the present state of affairs, and unanimously setting open the cellar doors, applied themselves heartily to carousal, and destitute of any attachment to their master, they drank him a prosperous journey to the jail, whither they understood he must shortly be removed. The old steward alone attended his master, and this he did with a tenderness and respect which did honour to his honest heart.

In this scene of riot, confusion, and distress, Mrs. Seaforth and the rest of the party arrived at the Hall—the intelligence they received

received had an instantaneous effect on the noble Baron, for he no sooner alighted from the carriage, than he mounted a saddle horse, and, attended by his valet, set off post for London, the delicate texture of his Lordship's nerves, we presume, not allowing him to remain a witness to a scene of such distress, as the Hall now presented.

The hopes of Mr. and Mrs. Seaforth now rested with their son, who in consideration of his wife's fortune, they naturally supposed would contribute to the relief of his parent ; they were soon, however,

ever, convinced, that the filial principle was not more lively in his breast than the fraternal had appeared on a former occasion—he flatly refused to do any thing in the affair, nor did Lady Teresa seem at all displeased with the unnatural determination of her husband. Mean time the bailiff became importunate, and, perceiving he was likely to obtain neither money nor bail-bond, insisted on carrying his prisoner to the county jail, though it was manifest that the poor gentleman grew every hour more and more debilitated by a nervous fever, which, toge-

ther with the gout in his stomach,
produced very dangerous symp-
toms.

LETTER

LETTER XVIII.

THE Hanburys having been some time at Rose-Hill, could not remain entirely ignorant of the transactions at the Hall. Many things indeed reported of that family, inspired them with a presentiment that all would not end as well as it could be wished—the present pecuniary embarrassment of Mr. Seaforth did not therefore

N 2 occasion

occasion so much surprise as it did pain. Pride, which, in their estimation, ought to form no part of the human composition, excited their contempt wherever it appeared; but real distress never failed to awaken their compassion, however unworthy the sufferer had rendered himself of that sentiment. Indeed the idea of an old man, oppressed by sickness, lingering the sad remains of his days in a prison, was sufficient to inspire feelings of that kind in hearts less susceptible of the social emotions than theirs were, tho' Edric Seaforth proved himself incapable of such impression.

To

To pity and to relieve a distress were the same with the benevolent inhabitants of Rose-Hill.

"I will go and see what can be done for this imprudent family," said Mr. Hanbury. His lady applauded the intention—"On this occasion (added she) you will probably avoid the insults which, at a less humiliating period, you must have expected from them."

"True, my dear, (answered he) but as I would do good from a much higher motive than a regard to the approbation of men, so I should pity, rather than resent their folly and ingratitude."

To be brief, the good man, putting some bank notes into his pocket-book, set out immediately for the Hall, where he was received by Mrs. Seaforth with a frown, which expressed both displeasure and contempt. Without revealing the purport of his business to her, he went directly to the chamber in which Mr. Seaforth was confined, which was easily distinguished by the bailiff and his attendant parading before the door—hither Mrs. Seaforth followed in silence, and, with inexpressible hauteur, flung herself into an easy chair by the bed-side, anxiously expecting a revelation of the business.

finess. The features of the sick man no longer wore that austere reserve which usually marked them at the approach of those whom he deemed his inferiors—he stretched forth his hand to Mr. Hanbury—he wept.

“ Be comforted, (said Mr. Hanbury) I am come to offer my assistance on the present disagreeable occasion ?”

Here Mrs. Seaforth started from her chair, and grasped his hand, with an emotion which fully proved the truth of an old observation, that pride is gene-

rally near akin to meanness—she fell on her knees before him—called him their friend—their good angel.

“What is the debt, my dear Sir,” said he, without deigning to notice the extravagant emotions of the lady.—Fifty pounds was the sum. Mr. Hanbury put a bill on the table for sixty, and was about to retire, when Mr. Seaforth, beckening him to stop, thus addressed him,

“My friend, I am in that situation when prejudice might be supposed to give way to the dic-
tates

tates of common sense—I fear I have been much to blame—my children—”

“ Would you see them ? ”

“ They owe you far greater obligations than I can pretend to— if they would forgive a father who has not used them as he ought, I think I could be satisfied.”

“ I will answer for both— mean time rest assured of the continuance of my affection to them—but I see this visit has fatigued you, and I will take my leave ; not without requesting that you will
send

send for me whenever it may be in my power to be farther serviceable."

Mr. Seaforth could not utter an adieu, which he felt would be his last—he wept—he even sobbed aloud. Mr. Hanbury more than once put his handkerchief to his eyes as he went down stairs, whither Mrs. Seaforth attended him, with an obsequiousness which met what it deserved—his utter contempt. He had hurried from the Hall principally with an intention of dispatching an express to London, for the purpose of acquainting Julia with her father's, illness,

ness, and anxiety to be reconciled to her before he died.

It is not to be doubted, but that such an intimation was capable of awakening the tenderest sensations in the breast of Mrs. Frank Hanbury. She had tenderly loved her father, and had ever been inclined to attribute every instance of neglect or severity she had experienced from him, more to the influence of her mother and brother, than to his own disposition. To receive his last benediction was happiness ineffable, and would have been the completion of her earthly bliss; she

she left town therefore within half an hour after the arrival of the messenger, and travelling with the greatest possible expedition, was shortly in sight of her natal mansion, though she was not so fortunate to reach it 'till her father had breathed his last. Oppressed with misery—painfully feeling the unkindness of his eldest son, for whose sake he had deserted his more deserving children, and mourning the errors of his past life, he had expired exactly one hour before Julia could arrive.

In that single hour such a train of reflections had occurred

to

to Mrs. Seaforth, that she was again a very different woman to what she had appeared at the time of Mr. Hanbury's visit—her humility being then the transient impulse of a moment, or rather the effect of pusillanimity, her temper by this time was reverted to its old channel. She no sooner perceived herself a widow than she considered that the late embarrassments were no more—it belonged not to her to be answerable for the debts of her late husband, and she now entered on the possession of her dowry, which tho' not large, was sufficient to render her independent—for these reasons

she thought proper to resume her constitutional pride, and to look with contempt on trade and all its dependancies. When, therefore, Mrs. Frank Hanbury's carriage drove up to the door, a servant was dispatched to that lady, to inform her, that Mrs. Seaforth having no acquaintance with the trading part of the community, she supposed this visit to be occasioned by mistake, as Rose-Hill was in the same neighbourhood.

“ I will not be thus repulsed, (cried the weeping Julia) I came to pay my last duties to my father, nor will I be prevented.”

“ My

“ My old master is dead,” said the man, attempting to oppose her entering the house. A deathly paleness instantaneously overspread her face, and she fainted in the arms of her own footman—it was sometime before she recovered, but nobody from within was allowed to tender the least assistance. At length, after venting her feelings in a flood of tears, she told the servant to acquaint his mistress that she only craved permission to see the dear remains of her father; but even this request was denied, and she heard her mother’s voice from the lobby, commanding her never to seek entrance more within those

those doors. The amiable Julia, wounded more exquisitely than it is possible to conceive, ordered the footman to go on, and soon had the consolation of pouring the effusions of her filial grief into the kind maternal bosom of Mrs. Hanbury, by whom she was received with the tenderest affection, as also by the father of her beloved Frank. The shock, occasioned by her treatment at the Hall, was found too injurious to her delicate frame for her to be capable of returning immediately to town, and she was consequently obliged to continue at Rose-Hill, with the best and kindest friends that a young

young woman was ever blest with, till after the interment of her father, which was conducted without any marks of that distinction which he too much idolized when alive. It was shrewdly suspected, that the tears which Mrs. Seaforth shed on this occasion, originated less in sorrow for the death of her husband, than from inability to bestow on him that funeral pomp which she thought the dignity of the family demanded—a pomp, in which the vain-glorious delight, more for the gratification of their own ostentatious humour, than from a motive of respect to the dead.

LETTER XIX.

SCARCELY were Mr. Seaforth's remains deposited in the tomb of his ancestors, before the towering views of Mrs. Seaforth received a check, from a quarter whence she least expected it. Her jointure did not exceed an hundred and fifty pounds a year—however, with that she doubted not of making a figure among her
old

old neighbours, for she had no idea of quitting the Hall, where she hoped to maintain her former precedency—but although she had treated the too often culpable gaiety of Lady Terefa with a blind partiality, her Ladyship was secretly weary of the company of a precise old mother-in-law, and had hitherto laid such restraints on herself, on that account, as were neither natural nor agreeable to her taste, and her behaviour soon demonstrated the nature of her sentiments—nor was Edric himself less desirous of the removal of his mother, from a mansion which was now his own—in

fact, both these last too nearly resembled each other in the love of arbitrary power ever to agree under the same roof. The succeeding to the family estate had augmented his self-importance so much, that from being merely churlish and morose, he was now become insolent and oppressive. Nothing being more easy than to find occasions for quarrel, when anxiously sought, so it was not long before Lady Teresa had so sharp a contention with her mother-in-law, as ended in the exact point the former had intended, namely, an appeal from the old lady to her son, who, duly improving the opportunity,

portunity, frankly desired his mother to provide herself with some other place of residence than the Hall. There was perhaps no affront whatever which Mrs. Seaforth would not more readily have overlooked, than the indignity of being dismissed from a house where she had for many years been mistress, and to which, for many reasons, she was closely attached. Her resentment surpassed all decent bounds, under the influence of which she flew to Rose-Hill, where she understood Julia still continued—that daughter, whom a short time before she had spurned with contempt from her door, and

now as abject as then supercilious, thought proper to select as the confidante of her wrongs.

Julia listened to her mother's discourse with profound respect, and even tears at that part of her story which displayed the unnatural conduct of Edric; and to render her wholly independent of such a son, was an object she would with pleasure have accomplished—a thought indeed suggested itself to her amiable mind to that purpose, but she had too great a respect for the judgment of Mr. and Mrs. Hanbury, to engage in an affair of importance without

without their advice—she privately gave that good lady a signal for a tête-à-tête, and then addressed her thus—

“ You will not blame me, my more than maternal friend, for feeling so sensibly as I do, the humiliating circumstances of a mother?”

“ Blame you, my dear child, (cried Mrs. Hanbury) no, I admire your amiable sensibility.”

“ Then, Madam, I will proceed to acquaint you with a little plan I have formed in my own

mind for her relief, but I would not go farther than this without asking your advice. My poor mother's income cannot be sufficient to enable her to keep house in the manner I could wish her to do—now the generosity of Mr. Hanbury has, you know, provided me with a handsome allowance for pin money, which I cannot reasonably have the least necessity for.”

“ I perfectly comprehend your meaning, my love, and warmly applaud the principles which impel it—but neither your husband nor his parents will suffer you to be

be a loser by feelings which do you so great an honour. Your mother shall receive an addition to her income, sufficient to enable her to live comfortably, without her worthy daughter's stripping herself of her pin-money—you must not, by such a step, cast a reproach on your husband, Julia."

"Oh, you are the most excellent of beings, (kissing Mrs. Hanbury's hand) and my Frank the tenderest of husbands, and most generous of men—but, Madam, do you consider, that by taking this measure out of my own hands,

you deprive me of all share of merit, in regard to my mother's future support. Suffer me, at least, to do something which I may value myself on, for hitherto the virtue and generosity of this dear family have forced me to feel myself almost a non-entity?"

“ Well, well, (tenderly embracing her) if you have really set your heart upon this business, so let it be? Go, my sweet girl, then, and inform your mother of what you intend to do for her—Frank and his father shall hereafter talk farther of the matter—they will settle every thing.”

Mrs.

Mrs. Hanbury and Julia then returned, hand in hand, to the parlour, where Mrs. Seaforth was bitterly weeping over her uncomfortable situation. She was no sooner informed of the liberal provision designed her by her daughter, than she expressed her satisfaction in a manner which plainly shewed the selfishness of her soul, and next extolled the goodness of her daughter in terms of such gross adulation, that Mrs. Hanbury, provoked to see her so palpably act the sycophant, said, with a little severity, "You now see, Madam, what an inestimable treasure you lately overlooked."

"Aye,

“Aye, dear Madam, (returned the other, in a fawning tone) I little thought how greatly I should one day be obliged to the dear creature.”

“No more of this, my dear mother, I entreat (cried Julia)—if it has been in my power to contribute to your comfort, reflect from whence I derive the means—rather let your acknowledgments be made to this dear amiable family, whose exalted goodness puts it now in my power to shew my duty to you—they who took a fugitive, a beggar, to their bosoms.”

This

This lively effusion of a grateful heart in half a second set all the sparks of family pride in a blaze—Mrs. Seaforth, forgetting the very obligation which she had so fervently acknowledged but a moment before—forgetting also the respect which both good manners and good policy would have directed to Mrs. Hanbury, she replied, with an air of ineffable scorn—

“Poor mean spirited wretch, I am sorry to see you so wanting to yourself. Let those same generous people know, that even a beggar of the house of Seaforth is superior to their alliance.”

Shocked

Shocked beyond expression at this insolent weakness of her mother, poor Julia burst into a flood of tears, on which Mrs. Hanbury rose, and throwing her arms fondly round her neck—"Be not hurt, my dear child, (said she) on my account—be assured I ever deemed the follies of mankind as deserving rather pity than resentment. I would no more be offended at the follies of a weak mind, under the tyranny of prejudice or passion, than at those of a maniac—both are equally remote from the influence of right reason."

It was fortunate for Mrs. Seaforth, however, that Mrs. Hanbury, rather than her husband, had witnessed that intemperate effusion of an insolent and proud soul—for beneficent as he was, and indulgent to the weaknesses of his species, he would have considered the incident as such a proof of an incorrigible nature, as merited rather correction than lenity. Mrs. Seaforth after this gave the two ladies to understand, that it was her intention to retire into North Wales, which was her native country—they thought it an eligible step, and a few days afterwards she set out for that place, where,

where, having some distant relations still living, she doubtless designed to pass her days, in a manner congenial to her wishes.

Julia now being entirely recovered of her late indisposition, and impatient to return to town, received the parting benedictions of Mr. and Mrs. Hanbury, and took her journey to the capital, where conjugal love and pure domestic felicity awaited her.

LETTER

LETTER XX.

SHORTLY after Mrs. Seaforth's departure for Wales, the unexpected arrival of Baron Wesmar at the Hall occasioned a very extraordinary revolution in the state of affairs there. Though received with all possible demonstrations of respect, he obviously assumed much more the air of a proprietor than a visitor, and within half

an hour after his arrival, Edric received from him a formal notice to quit the premises, of which his Lordship declared himself the legal possessor. Such a declaration certainly favoured too much of infamy to meet with serious attention—an important and unpleasing fact, however, was now discovered, namely, that Edric Seaforth had really sold his reversionary right in the family estate for the consideration of five hundred pounds to the Baron, under the disguise of the money-lender at Bath. The deed which he had then heedlessly signed, was in the hands of the Baron, and, beyond all doubt, clearly

clearly authenticated the right which his Lordship now claimed, to the rents and profits of the estate during the life of Edric. To attempt a description of the consternation, fury, and grief, which such a discovery occasioned, would be vain—suffice it to observe, that Lady Teresa, having been kept entirely ignorant of this manœuvre, and instantaneously comprehending the share which she herself was doomed to bear in its miserable effects, entertained some hopes of intimidating the Baron to allow of some mitigation in the extent of his demand, and to prevail with him to accept an

P 2 annuity,

annuity, rather than reduce herself and husband to actual poverty, which he not at all inclining to do, she proceeded to threaten him with disclosing some secrets, which he knew it was in her power to do.

“ I will spare you that trouble (answered he, in good plain English)—for I now renounce the title of Baron Wesmar, and declare myself plain Will Hammond—no longer a Pole, but an Englishman. And you, Madam, I have the honour to announce by the just appellation of an Italian courtesan, and one of the d—n—st strumpets that ever drew breath.”

“ What !

“What! (cried the enraged and astonished Edric) to compleat my folly and misfortune, have I married an Italian courtezan?”

“Nothing better I assure you, most noble Sir, and I heartily wish you joy of your bargain — but hark’ee, man, don’t be so d—n—d cast down neither—’tis true, the lady was a little out of date at Paris, where I had the happiness of becoming acquainted with her, nevertheless she will be in high vogue in London, whither I would advise you to carry your goods to market?”

“ And the first money earned (exclaimed the lady) shall be to buy thee a halter, thou villain—had you staid two days longer in Holland, you know you would have been hanged there, for a forgery on a banker.”

The small portion of reason which Edric had possessed, was by this time apparently extinct—his aspect resembled that of a maniac—catching up a sword, which lay on the table, he aimed it so nicely at the breast of the Baron, as would soon have sent him to the shades, had not the steward, who had witnessed the shocking discovery,

discovery, held back his arm, and then forced him into another room—the prudent old man, dreading the consequences which might yet ensue, locked the door on his wretched master, and then went to request the advice of Mr. Hanbury, to whom he minutely related what had passed at the Hall.

“ It does not in the least surprise me, (answered that gentleman) to find these two persons are not what they pretended to be—their characters and assumed rank were, in my opinion, extremely doubtful—for a forgery did she say? (musing) I have some notion”—

He then, without finishing the

sentence, went to his 'scrutoire, and perused some papers—then resumed—"I will take a walk to the Hall, John, my curiosity excites me to see this extraordinary fellow, for I am quite a stranger to his person."

Mr. Hanbury then sat out with the steward for the Hall—he found the Baron (we will retain his title a little longer) and his supposed sister loading each other with bitter recriminations. Mr. Hanbury stood for some minutes attentively considering the Baron's person—he then whispered the old steward, who instantly withdrew.

drew. "Have you any business in this house, Sir?" cried the Baron, with an insolent air.

"I have, Sir."

"And what might it be, pray?"

"I shall shortly acquaint you."

The mysterious air, and scrutinizing eye of this gentleman seemed not to be much relished by his noble Lordship—he appeared a little disconcerted, which the better to conceal, he affected ra-

ther more civility than before he had shewn, and entered into some indifferent discourse, which the other did not decline—presently, however, the steward returned, and with him a constable.

“Now, Sir, (said Mr. Hanbury to the Baron) you shall know my business. Mr. Constable, I charge this man with felony, and injoin you to take him into custody.”

The accused person immediately turned pale, and, in a trembling voice, demanded what crime was alledged against him?

“A forgery,

“ A forgery, (answered Mr. Hanbury) committed two years since, on the banking house at Amsterdam—I then received from my correspondent there, an account of the affair, together with so exact a description of the delinquent’s person, that I can scarcely be mistaken in affirming that you are the man.”

“ That I’ll be sworn you are not, (cried my Lady Teresa) for he has confessed the fact to me, and I know it was at Amsterdam.”

The culprit here fell on his knees, and entreated mercy—declared

clared that he was ready to reimburse the money he had obtained by the forgery, and, if that would not do, to double it. "Here, (pursued he, delivering the deed which he had fraudulently obtained from Edric) as a proof of my penitence for my crimes, I restore this injured man to his right—and now, Sir, most humbly entreat your mercy."

"I take this instrument (answered Mr. Hanbury) because it plainly appears the contract was merely the effect of a villainous imposition, on the weakness and inattention of that gentleman, and
the

the money advanced by you shall be repaid; but it is not in my power to screen you from the punishment due to your former crime, if it even were my inclination. The law must now take its course—all I can do is to write as favourably as the case will justify, to those gentlemen in Holland whom you have defrauded—the issue of your fate will depend on them.”

The delinquent was then taken before the proper magistrate, and committed to prison. The house being thus cleared, and Edric Seaforth reinstated in lawful possession
of

of the premises, it remained to be considered what was to be done with the woman he had unfortunately taken to wife, whom neither tears nor submission could prevail on him to cohabit in future with. At the first avowal of this resolution she behaved with great haughtiness, and declared that nothing should force her to agree to a separation; but at length the prudent management of Mr. Hambury succeeded, and articles of separation were executed, by which Edric bound himself to allow her fifty pounds per annum, on condition of her never coming within twenty miles of the Hall. Thus
were

were the several branches of this family indebted to Mr. Hanbury for their preservation, and the enjoyments they respectively possessed; and, compelled to own that what gives a real superiority in social life, is not birth but virtue—the rough ungenerous nature of Edric was at last softened by that reflection, and he went so far as to say, that he hoped he should be the better man as long as he lived, for the excellent lessons to be learnt in the character and conduct of the Hanbury family. As he now visited sometimes at Rose-Hill, he had frequent opportunities of seeing the son.

son of his much injured Matilda—the innocent attractions of the child won insensibly on his heart, and he confessed that it appeared to him an atonement due to the wrongs of it's mother, to cherish the little fellow with the utmost exertion of a father's fondness. Mrs. Hanbury, however, would not entirely resign her young charge to him, being fully resolved to discharge the promise she had given Miss Lavington, of watching over the moral principles of her son with a parent's diligence—she thought proper, however, to omit nothing which might improve the affection which Edric actually began

gan to feel for him, as well as to awaken in the breast of that gentleman a due contrition for his conduct towards the unhappy victim of his passion, and certainly succeeded so far as some times to draw tears from his eyes, and since his unhappy circumstances prevented the probability of his ever having a legitimate heir, he declared it to be a point of justice in his idea, that George Lavington should succeed to the Seaforth Estate.

LETTER XXI.

LENITY towards atrocious offenders against the laws of civil society made no part of Mr. Hanbury's character—on the contrary, he thought it a duty which every man owed to the community, to bring such offenders to punishment. Yet, as he supposed the aim of jurisprudence to intend not so much individual revenge as the public

public utility, he conceived there were cases in which society would be advantaged more by the pardon, than the death of a criminal, except where the demand was blood for blood—the case of Hammond, however, he thought deserving of some compassion, for having engaged a worthy divine to visit him in the jail, he received from that gentleman such accounts of the prisoner's penitence, as induced him to include in the account he transmitted to Holland, so forcible a recommendation of the criminal to mercy, that the gentlemen whom it concerned were prevailed on to drop the prosecution.

secution. There were indeed good grounds for hoping that a moral reformation had taken place on the part of Hammond, who, on his enlargement, testified a desire of going to some of the back settlements in America. "It was idleness (said he) and ill company which drew me into wickedness—a state of life which implies industry, and the society of plain laborious people, would prevent a relapse into those habits of life which I now detest."

It is not to be doubted but that the munificence of Mr. Hanbury would readily be applied, to encourage

encourage so eligible a measure. Hammond soon after embarked, and, for ought which has been discovered to the contrary, fully answered the hopes which that friend of mankind had formed of his future good conduct. Before he left England he drew a short sketch of his past life, the substance of which shall be here subjoined in his own words—

“I am by birth one of those unhappy beings, who, being the fruit of illicit love, are for that reason doomed to a more cruel fate than the irrational animals—be-
 rest, even from the moment of
 Q 3 birth,

birth, of the endearments which mere instinct impells the brute creation to lavish on their young—consigned to the hands of a mercenary creature, perhaps without principle or humanity, to sustain a thousand species of barbarity, and, what is of still more importance to a rational creature, the entire neglect of moral culture and religious knowledge. In this condition I passed the first seven years of my life, when I was put apprentice by the parish on the estate of a widow gentlewoman, in whose family I lived a tolerably easy life for three years more. I suppose I must have been endowed

with a pretty good understanding, since though no pains were bestowed on my education, I acquired an insight into reading, which my mistress being informed of, she sent me to a school in the village, where I learnt writing and accounts; but the fervility of my condition, and the obscurity of my birth, pointed me out as a mark of ridicule to the boys—of severity to the master. I daily witnessed the most palpable faults, as lying, thieving, cheating, &c. partially overlooked in my superior companions, whilst the smallest negligence of mine was punished with rigour—hence the destruction of

moral good, and evil became confounded in my ideas, and I concluded that the reason why one man was esteemed more virtuous than another, was because he either possessed more cunning, in concealing his true character, or, what was more frequently the case, he possessed greater wealth: In short, I began to consider money as the chief good, and the next to that the being able to dress well, game, and get drunk. By this account of myself, it will appear that I was a boy of deep reflection—so indeed I was; but having no instructor, my mind took a bias contrary to what perhaps

Haps would have been the case, had I been born in any other condition of life.

“ At the expiration of three years my mistress died, and I determined then to travel farther from a spot where the ignominy of my birth exposed me to perpetual derision. Who or what my parents were I never knew—the only name I went by was that of Bastard, which I suppose was first given by way of reproach; my late mistress added Will to it, and so I was called Will Bastard. Disgusted, however, with a name which I considered as reproaching,

proaching, I assumed that of Hammond; and, going to London, was charitably taken into a gentleman's family, to clean shoes, and assist the scullion. I here behaved with so much propriety, that I rose, by degrees, to the rank of a footman—when I say propriety, I mean craft or dissimulation, for the kitchen of a man of fortune, is not the best school of morality—in fact, I saw instances sufficient to confirm me in the principles I had already imbibed, and to awaken a taste for the loosest pleasures. My young master was soon to set out on his travels, and he pitched on me to attend him—in
order

order therefore to qualify me for the office, I was commanded to go, at certain hours in each day, to study the French tongue, at a neighbouring academy. I learned the language with great facility, and then accompanied my young master on a tour to the Continent. He was at that time scarcely twenty, and being liberally supplied with money from home, he soon launched into every fashionable extravagance, imitating the manners of the most unprincipled, and associating only with the licentious, among the French nobility and gentry. 'Tis true, he had a tutor, but that gentleman understood.

understood his interest too well to act the part of a rigid censor of the actions of his pupil, who, left to pursue the bent of inclination without restraint, soon acquired the character of a buck of the first rate, as we commonly express it in England. I had acquired some smattering in the art of gaming, whilst in London, but at Paris I became an adept in the science, by which means my pockets were as well furnished with specie as the company I kept (mostly the valets of people of quality) could be supposed to allow, so that I passed my time merrily enough. It happened, however, that I was
seized.

Seized with a fever, and my master determining to go to Italy, he had the cruelty to leave me behind in that situation, without leaving me the smallest provision for the expences of sickness, or my return to England. Whatever my vices were, I had served him with fidelity, and even affection; a more generous return was consequently what I merited—however, from that time I saw him no more.

“ The charity of a French ecclesiastic preserved me from the misery of famine, and as soon as I was well enough to go abroad, he took me to attend on himself.

This

This gentleman was of considerable eminence in the church, and possessed a large revenue—his deportment was grave and severe, but his private character licentious in the extreme, for which reason I had no occasion to affect a higher degree of purity than my principles really impelled me; notwithstanding the situation did not please me long, as I had been used to more dissipated scenes, than he could with propriety have permitted in his house. I left the service of the divine, and entered that of a French Marquis—here it was I became acquainted with Signora Teresa, an Italian courtizan,

tezan, whom that nobleman had then in keeping. She soon distinguished me in a manner highly flattering to that vanity, of which, by this time, I had no small share, and in short admitted me to a partnership with my Lord in her favours. The Marquis was liberal to her, even to profusion, and she I believe the most expensive of her class; nevertheless she contrived to make me frequent presents, of very considerable sums, which I speedily circulated among some humbler fair ones, for constancy was not one of my principles. The amour had continued a considerable time, when the Signora avowed

avowed so violent a passion for me, and so perfect a disgust to her noble keeper, who doated on her, that she proposed our eloping together; and, to enable us the better to execute the project, she informed me of the place where my Lord deposited his money. At first I rejected the proposal with horror, not from any idea I entertained of the crime, but from a real affection I bore to him, who had ever been the gentlest of masters—partly, however, by dint of persuasion, and partly by reproach, the ungrateful woman drew me into her measures. I took the cash as directed, and we privately decamped

camped to the Austrian Netherlands, where we hired a handsome lodging, and lived together about couple of months in luxurious indolence. But the resentment of the Marquis was not so easily evaded as we imagined—indeed I believe he would have pardoned the robbery much sooner than the loss of a mistress, of whom he was extravagantly fond—in fine, his emissaries pursued, and we had only time to make escape, by resolving to take different routes. Whither she went I know not, nor greatly cared, for I was by this time sated with possession, and moreover looked upon her as a

fort of evil genius, who had decoyed me to ruin—for my part I went to Holland, with intent to sail for my native country, but my evil destiny designed otherwise, or rather my own depraved disposition.

“ At Amsterdam I disposed of such of my clothes as were in the French style, and purchased a suit of English broad cloth, in which I had formed a project of reaping some advantage from an English gentleman, who had long resided in that city, with an universal reputation of being one of the most upright benevolent men in the world,

world, and such I firmly believe he is. With as much dejection in my face and air, as I could possibly assume, I placed myself in one of those public walks which I understood he frequented—my figure struck him as I had hoped it would, and finding I was an Englishman, by some pathetic exclamations which I purposely uttered, he accosted me with an expression of countenance and manner, which seemed to say—"If you are in distress I will assist you." In fine, I was now an English merchant, under some pecuniary embarrassment; and, by the help of a ready invention, uttered so

plausible' a story, that his feelings were interested in my behalf.

“ Mr. C——, the worthy gentleman of whom I am writing, was then a partner in a banking-house at Amsterdam, and being in want of a clerk, proposed my accepting that place, with a salary every way answerable to the liberality of his sentiments. I readily embraced the offer, and for six months felt myself entirely at ease; the few hours of employment which the place required, gave a higher relish to the leisure of the evenings, which I now usually passed with sober respectable people, in a manner

manner which gave a flow to the spirits, without approaching to intoxication. I can truly say this interval of my life was the only one in which I enjoyed perfect serenity of mind. At length I accidentally heard mention of a house in the city, where a society of gamblers privately met—curiosity induced me to go thither, but unfortunately the sight of a gaming-table was a temptation I had not fortitude to resist—in a word, I played, and won considerably—I repeated my visits, and was still successful; but at last I was met by some as deep in the science as myself, and I lost much

more than I had the means of paying—this fatal incident induced me to commit the crime of forgery, not once doubting but that I should be able to replace the money I had thus obtained, long before the draft could be presented—in that expectation I was disappointed—the forgery was discovered, and I fled into Poland.

“ Here it was my singular fate to meet again the Signora Teresa, who supported herself by public prostitution—we laid our heads together on projecting a scheme for our future plan of living, which we agreed should be together—
then

then it was that I assumed the title of Baron Wesmar, and she that of Lady Teresa, my Lordship's sister, under which fictitious characters we came to England, and began our depredations on the public at Bath. The foibles of the Seaforth family were the general topic of discourse—I availed myself hereof, by adapting my conversation to those weaknesses, which I found composed the leading traits in Mrs. Seaforth's character. Teresa indeed had very soon formed her designs on Mr. Edric, to which I made no objection, being really desirous of ridding myself of that abandoned woman; but for my

own part, I declare, that the advantages I hoped to draw from the acquaintance were very different from a matrimonial connexion, 'till Mrs. Seaforth herself inspired the project, by acquainting me that Miss Julia had fifteen hundred pounds in her own right—the ignorance, credulity, and prejudices of this family rendered the deception extremely easy, and I confess Teresa and I had little more to do than to fall in with their ridiculous humour. The sequel of this adventure is too well known to need recapitulation, and I shall here close my memoir, by solemnly averring, that independant of
the

the final consequences of vice and virtue, I am now seriously of opinion, that it is for the interest of a rational creature to pursue the latter, though it were only with a view to present comfort.

“ From that conviction it is that I intend, if my life should be granted me, (which from the known benignity of Mr. C. and the benevolent intercession of Mr. Hanbury, I have hopes of) to sail immediately for America, it being my idea, that the condition of society in infant colonies, and new settlements, resembles most the state of uncorrupted nature—here,
by

by removing myself from the reach of temptations, with which my disposition too easily closes, I shall be necessitated to a life of activity, from which health, tranquillity, and content, must naturally result. Thus a life justly forfeited to the community, may yet terminate in the practice of those virtues, which, at the same time they are most useful to society in general, are intended to promote the happiness of man as an individual."

LETTER

LETTER XXII.

IT would not be right, I think, Eugenius, to close this history without gratifying the curiosity you may be supposed to feel, respecting that branch of the Seaforth family whose character, I presume, has somewhat interested your regard. Captain Seaforth then having obtained permission of his superiors to pay a visit to his friends

friends in England, found at length that completion of his happiness, to which his innate modesty scarcely allowed him, even in thought, to aspire. On his arrival in London, he found that Mrs. Manners had been dead some time—indeed she never recovered from the indisposition mentioned in a ~~former~~ letter. Charlotte felt that unfeigned concern for the death of her mother, which the tenderness of her disposition, and the excellence of her principles, could not fail to inspire. It was not till some months after this event, that Mr. Manners made a serious inquiry into the state of his

his daughter's affections—Stanley was not one of those assiduous lovers who allow a mistress but little time for reflection—he considered Miss Manners as his property, whenever he chose to claim her; and not being in violent haste to enter the bonds of wedlock, he bestowed those intervals only in visiting his mistress, which he could decently spare from his dissipated amusements. Mr. Manners now gave his daughter explicit permission to put a final end to the expectation of a lover, whose suit she had never favoured—but the good old gentleman went still a step farther, he declared himself entirely.

tirely willing to accept for a son-in-law whoever she herself deemed worthy of being so, without the least regard to pecuniary matters, so entire was his confidence in the rectitude of her judgment, and delicacy of her sentiments.

At this most favourable juncture William Seaforth accompanied his brother and sister on a visit to the family—true, he was most impatient to behold once more the fair object of his purest affection, though without the remotest design of disclosing to her the nature of his sentiments. The penetration of Mr. Manners did
that

that for him which his own diffidence would never have allowed—that gentleman, with the most benign countenance, took the Captain by the hand, and leading him to that part of the room where his daughter and Mrs. Frank Hanbury were sitting, “Charlotte, (said he) this young foldier’s eyes have said a great deal—what say you, will you give him your hand?”——“Nay, my dear papa, (cried the young lady, blushing) you should at least have left the gentleman at liberty to express his own secret, if indeed he has any.”

“Why so I do—but I saw you
2 both

both wished the ice broke, yet neither inclined to do it. Do you hear, Sir, (smiling) if you have any secret, you may out with it?"

"Oh, Mr. Manners, (cried Seaforth) this goodness quite unmans me—were I worthy of that lady's favour, I could indeed express a long and ardent passion."

"Hark'ee, Sir, (interrupted Mr. Manners) if my daughter thinks you worthy, so do I; for I believe I may say she will have as much wealth as will serve you both—eighty thousand pounds will tolerably support you. Come, Charlotte,

Charlotte, lay aside affectation, and honestly say, if you like this youth ?”

“ Indeed, Sir, you do not use me fairly—I can make no confession of the kind.”

“ Well, well, give him your hand then, if you do not absolutely dislike him ?”

Charlotte averting her head, concealed her blushes in Julia’s bosom, and at the same moment extended her hand, which the Captain caught, and kissed with transport. It is certain a man

might have traversed the whole Metropolis before he would have discovered so happy a group of friends, as that day encompassed Mr. Manners' table. Julia and Charlotte had, from their first acquaintance, entertained a sincere affection for each other, and they now embraced each other as sisters, whom friendship had long since united. Frank Hanbury cordially congratulated his friend on his felicity——“ which (added Seaforth, with the most grateful remembrance of past events) I am primarily indebted for to yourself, my dear Frank”——nor was Mr. Manners himself less delighted

than the rest of the company. On that day fortnight he publicly bestowed his daughter in marriage to the man of her heart, and settled his whole fortune on them at his decease; some time after which he entirely resigned business, and went to reside at the distance of half a mile from Rose-Hill, enjoying, for the remainder of his life, serenity and friendship.

Frank Hanbury, some time afterwards, admitted a gentleman into partnership with him, by which means he was at liberty to accompany his lady every year to Rose-Hill, where they usually

spent the whole summer, contributing, by their filial assiduities, to bless the declining years of Mr. and Mrs. Hanbury, and daily receiving, from that excellent pair, such proofs of tenderness, as improved the happiness which conjugal love and harmony richly afforded them.

The history of these two families, my dear Eugenius, of opposite manners and character, clearly illustrate the true nature of social pre-eminence, and tend to prove in what that superiority consists, which the natural emulation of the human mind prompts it to aspire to

to—in a commercial nation, like our own, it ought to be a point well understood. Yet while I despise, and would, if possible, expose to universal contempt the empty pride of blood, I by no means would be thought to have adopted the levelling system—distinction of rank may be both useful and ornamental to civil society—titles may give lustre to virtue. Certain it is, that the nobility of our kingdom do, at this day, produce shining examples of parts, learning, and virtue—nor can I be supposed to intend, by the foregoing letters, to aim at confounding those distinctions; but merely
to

to shew the futility of rank and precedence, when not distinguished by those moral and intellectual attainments which form the different characteristics of the ennobled, or the vulgar mind.

I am,

My dear Eugenius,

Ever yours,

P——.

4 DE 58

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